

344 4
4
THE
OPINIONS

OF
CERTAINE REVE-
rend and Learned Divines concer-
ning the Fundamentall Points of the true
Protestant Religion, and the Right Govern-
ment of Reformed Churches.

Wherein is declared the plaine Path-way
to a Godly and Religious Life.

EPHES. 4. 15.

Speake the truth in love.

Published by Authoritie.



Printed for Ch. Downes. 1643.

ST. JAMES PALACE

(H4815)
Wing 0356



To
The godly and Christian Readers,
Grace and Peace.

AS there is nothing more
pleasing to God, than to
be truly zealous for his
glorie, so no way better
to attaine that zeale, than
to read and meditate up-
on Gods Commandements; and strive to
live in love and charitie with all men,
which that you may the better performe, I
beseech you peruse these ensuing Discour-
ses, and the Lord give you understanding
in all things.

THE HISTORY OF THE
LIFE OF JOHN BUNYAN

BY JOHN BUNYAN

FROM HIS OWN
WRITINGS
AND
OTHERS

IN TWO VOLUMES

Pfal. 120.

When I was in trouble, I called
upon the Lord, & he heard me.

Deliver my soule, O Lord, from
lying lips: & from a deceitfull tongue.

What reward shall bee given or
done unto thee, thou false tongue? e-
ven mightie and sharp arrowes, with
hot burning coles.

Wo is me, that I am constrained to
dwell with Mesech: and to have mine
habitation among the tents of Kedar.

My soule hath long dwelt among
them, that be enemies unto peace.

I labour for peace, but when I speak
unto them thereof, they make them rea-
dy to battell.

1871
1872
1873
1874
1875
1876
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
1885
1886
1887
1888
1889
1890
1891
1892
1893
1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900

1901
1902
1903
1904
1905
1906
1907
1908
1909
1910
1911
1912
1913
1914
1915
1916
1917
1918
1919
1920
1921
1922
1923
1924
1925
1926
1927
1928
1929
1930
1931
1932
1933
1934
1935
1936
1937
1938
1939
1940
1941
1942
1943
1944
1945
1946
1947
1948
1949
1950
1951
1952
1953
1954
1955
1956
1957
1958
1959
1960
1961
1962
1963
1964
1965
1966
1967
1968
1969
1970
1971
1972
1973
1974
1975
1976
1977
1978
1979
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1988
1989
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000



THE
OPINION OF THE
RIGHT REVEREND FA-
THER IN GOD IOHN
DAVENANT Bishop of
Sarisbury.

To his learned and worthy friend
M^r IOHN DURY.



I S well worthy the con-
sideration of all pious
Divines, which God
speakes by his Prophet
Zachary, love the Truth
and Peace. With which
that of the Apostle also suite's well, *ἀλλή-
λως ἐν ἀγάπῃ, speak the truth in love.* Wee
may not so hotly pursue after Trueth, as
that in the mean time we wholly neglect
Peace; nor may we desire such a Peace as
A will

C. 8. V. 19.

Ephes. 4. 15.

will not consist with the Trueth. Those Divines therefore who quarrell and contend so much for the Faith and Religion, they may talke what they list, but hee that love's not both Trueth and Peace, love's indeed neither; nor hath he any true affection or desire to either of them, who desire's them not both. For if it be true which Philosophers tell us, that each naturall body doth no lesse desire it's unitie than it's being, I see no reason why the spirituall and mysticall body, the Church Catholique, should not with as great a zeale study to preserve her unitie: seeing if that be once dissolved and lost, shee is so farre from being a Church, that she cannot so much as be imagined one. Let us then on God's name be as earnest and eager in desiring & defending the Trueth as the best, but withall let us not forget that of *Saint Paul*, that *if it be possible, and as much as in us lies, we live peaceably with all men*: I say, with all men, in an externall and civill; but with all Christian men, in a spirituall and Ecclesiasticall peace. This is the earnest desire

Rom. 12. 18.

desire of our Saviour Christ, and 'tis the joynt wish & prayer of his whol Church, that all they who professe themselves be-
 leivers in Christ, might be *united and knit together into one body; that they might be all of one heart and of one soule.*

Joh. 17. 21.
 Act. 4. 32.

This being so, surely those pious and peacemaking Divines are highly to bee commended, who of late have imployed themselves and their endeavours about the reeonciling of the Reformed Churches. For my owne part, I would to God I were able to contribute any thing that might further and promote so good and godly a worke. What I can, I shall willingly at your request (Sir) doe it: and shall impart unto you what my thoughts were, when I lately meditated with my selfe hereupon.

In the first place therefore, it would bee considered, whether or no it be possible to establish such an union amongst all the Reformed Churches, so as that they shall account of one another not as friends only, but as Brethren; and exhibit mutually

each to other the signes, fruites, and effects not onely of an outward and generall freindship, but of a more intimate & spirituall amity and communion. For if this fraternall & spirituall union we so much desire, cannot be had, we may then desist; things impossible doe not binde us to the having or seeking of them: but if it may possibly be procured, 'twere a great pitty and a shame that so good a worke and so well-pleasing to God as this is, should be either oppoled or delayed.

Now when I say, that it would first be considered whether or no this Union we treat of, be possible; my meaning is, whether or no such an Union may stand with a diversity of Opinions amongst private Doctors in these severall Churches, touching those much-controverted points which have of a long time (to the great greife of all good men) much troubled the *Germane* Churches. For although it were to be wished, that Divines would fairely and fully agree amongst themselves about all those Controversies; yet for so many different

different mindes to concurre all in the same Opinion, is (as I conceive) a thing scarceto be hoped for, much lesse to be effected in one age. But that these said Churches, notwithstanding such disputes as hang undecided, may neverthelesse entertaine amongst themselves a Christian Charitie and correspondence, is apparent from hence, that as often as Divines of both sides have set themselves seriously about this work, they still prevailed in it as much as they desired; and they might no doubt have prevailed further, if they themselves had not wilfully stood in their own way:

Witnesse *Luther* himselve and the *Helvetians*: betwixt whom (though they differed in their opinions about the presence of Christs body) a freindly agreement notwithstanding was made at *Marpurge*: *Luther* there professing, that he would not by any meanes permit the adverse party that honour, to outstrip him in their desires of amitie and peace. Which peace, after that it had by I know not what mischeivous

*Hist. Hissor.
Sacr. Ann.
1529.*

Idem Ann.
1537-

Ibid.

devices been somewhat disturbed and diminished, was againe renewed & confirmed by them: whereat *Luther* himselfe rejoyced, and upon a strict examination of the *Helveticke* confession, held it very requisite that they should lovingly joyne hearts and hands together. But here if any one think, that this was no such entire and perfect Union as that which now I affirm to be possible; I will grant him this: but then I must adde withall, that it was not any impossibility in the thing it selfe, but rather the wilfull opposition of some amongst them, possessed with some jealousies and suspicions, which was the cause why that godly and good worke was not brought to full perfection. For as for *Bucer* and some other eminent Divines of the same opinion with him, they did not only sue for an absolute and perfect agreement, but besides they offered to make it appeare that it was very fit such an Union should be concluded; neither did they omit any thing that might make for the furthering of it.

Moreover,

Moreover, that this Union of the Reformed Churches we ſpeake of, is not a thing impoſſible, is confirmed further from that agreement amongſt the *Polonian* Churches, begun of late at *Sendomire*, & ever ſince carefully by them kept and obſerved: it is true, they could not bury all controverſies; but they could baniſh all contentions; and eſtabliſh ſo perfect a peace, as that they reſuſed not to admit of each other into their publike Congregati- ons, to the preaching of the word and Ad- miniſtration of the Sacraments. Which holy & brotherly concord of thoſe Churches, that moſt wiſe Prince *Lodowick*, Ele- ctour and Count Palatine, did not only by his letters to them congratulate, but deſi- red of Almighty God in his prayers, that the *Germane* Churches alſo might be bleſ- ſed with it.

What therefore was long ſince ſaid to that bleſſed peace-maker King *Solomon*, concerning the building of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, the ſame ſay I to all moderate and peaceable Divines concerning the u-
niting

*Harm. Confeſ.
par. 1. & 2.
in Confeſſ.
Polon.*

1. Chron. 22.
16.

niting of the Reformed Churches; *arise, yee Worthies, and be doing, and the Lord will be with you.* Never despaire but that may be now effected, which all men will grant hath been done heretofore.

But least this groundlesse bugbeare of a fancied impossibility should yet slacken the endeavours either of Princes, or Divines, or any other pious and well affected Christians, and deterre them from proceeding herein; I will recount all those lets and hinderances, which render the peace and union of Churches utterly impossible to be obtained: from whence it will easily appeare, that there's no one of them here, to hinder why the *Germane* Churches (notwithstanding some points of difference amongst them) may not seele a firme peace amongst themselves, and being once setled preserve it inviolable.

Now the first and maine Obstacle that hinders those Churches which agree not in all points of Religion, from entertaining a Communion amongst themselves, is the usurping and exercising of a tyrannicall

call power and authority one over another. For if any one Church will take upon her to domineer and lord it over the faith of other Churches, so as not to acknowledge any for her brethren, nor admit of any into her fellowship and Communion, but such onely as will be content to beleive and speak just as shee will have them, all hope is then taken away of ever obtaining or preserving any agreement in any differences or disputes whatsoever. For the sacred Scriptures forbid us thus to enslave our selves to any humane authority, and our sole Lord and Master Christ Jesus forbid's us to acknowledge any upon earth for a Lord over our Faith and Conscience: and that Church which enter's into a Communion with another upon these termes, doth not hereby purchase a Peace, but rather resign's up her selfe to a most unjust slavery. Onely the Church of *Rome* is come to that height of pride & madnesse, that she will take upon her to exclude from the communion of Saints, & damne to the pit of Hell all such Churches

Mar 23.

ches as will not submit their necks to that Antichristian yoke of absolute and blind obedience. God of his goodnes ever keep off this Popish folly and fury from setting foot in the Protestant Churches : which if it should once take place , that union of our Churches which we are all bound to pray for, would bee no longer either to be hoped or wisht for. But (blessed be God for it) it is well known, there's not any of the Reformed Churches but doe from their soules detest and abhorre all such Antichristian ambition and desire of Sovereignty. And thus have I removed out of the way the maine Obstacle which usually occasion's a perpetuall division & rent betwixt such Churches as differ in some points, and thereby make's an union of those Churches to become impossible.

A second let or hinderance which may render the said union of different Churches (for example, the *Saxon* and *Helvetian* Churches) impossible, is the approbation and practice of Idolatry in the one, & the utter detestation of it in the other. That of
the

the Prophet *Hosea* is well knowne, *though* Israel *play the harlot, yet let not* Judah *offend: come yee not unto Gilgal, neither goe yee up to Beth-aven.* Likewise also that of the Apostle, *what agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* And a number of places more to the same purpose. Neither is that saying of *Tertullian* touching this matter unworthy our observation, *Idolatry* (saith he) *is become the grand and generall sin of whole mankind, the Epidemicall disease of the whole world.* Since therefore God so severely chargeth us to *keepe our selves from Idols &* all kinde of Idolatry, though never so speciously colour'd over, wee may well call that morally impossible which cannot be performed without some staine and tincture of Idolatry, and without a high and hainous offence against the sacred Majesty of God.

C. 4. v. 5.

2. Cor. 6. 16.

Here then we may behold that grand let, whereby the Reformed Churches (to their great greife of heart) are forced to shunne a Communion with the Church of Rome. For so farre in love is shee with

her Idolls, and so rigorously doth shee impose the worshipping of them upon all her children, that no man can be admitted into her Communion, at least not continue in it, unlesse he will become a notorious and down-right Idolater. If the case so stood, that the *Germane* Churches could not enter into and enjoy a blessed Unity and Peace one with another, except they must be required and bound either to practise an Idolatrous worship, or at the least to beleive and professe that such practice is not unlawfull, I would not stick to affirme that a Communion which cannot be had but upon such hard conditions, is indeed impossible to bee had: since (as Lawyers use to speake) *wee can doe onely so much, as may lawfully be done by us.*

And here we have just cause to blesse God, that the Reformed Churches (although they have not the happinesse to agree in all matters of lesser moment) yet doe they all of them by his grace unanimously conspire & joyne together against Idolatry; so as not onely to condemne, but also

also to beat downe and abolish it: inso-
much that if at this very houre they were
all disposed and desirous to joyne hands
and strike a league of amity and union, it
might be done without any the least dan-
ger of Idolatry. Away then with that pre-
tended impossibility of a Reconciliation,
grounded upon the perill of Idolatry: nor
let any such false surmises weaken the
heart or hands of any religious Christian
from going on with so good a worke.

The third & last Obstacle which doth
block up the way to an union & render's
it impossible, is the differing of severall
Churches about some fundamental point
of Faith, necessary to be knowne and be-
lieved by every christian upon paine & pe-
rill of eternall damnation; so as that the
one side doth solidly hold and maintaine
it, the other heretically denie's and oppo-
se's it. For to be at peace with Heretickes
who goe about to undermine and subvert
the foundation of our Christian faith,
what is it else but to revolt from Christ
the rocke on which the Church is found-

ded & built : Of this last Obstacle, because it is of speciall use and moment, I shall treat somewhat more at large.

In the first place therefore, I conceive that to be a Fundamentall point, which (by the ordination of God revealing such a truth) is of such necessity unto salvation to be knowne and assented unto, as that a bare Ignorance, much more a wilfull Opposition of it carries with it a certaine perill of exclusion from the kingdome of heaven. Divines now-adaies have no Commission to invent or coine any new Articles of this nature, and obtrude them on Gods Church : that which was not fundamentall in the Apostolicall and Primitive times, all our assertions and alterations and Anathema's will never be able to make it such.

These first and fundamentall Trueths, collected out of the whole body of the Scriptures & put together in the Apostles Creed, make up that Rule of Faith which *S. Austin* terme's *pussillis magnisq; communem*, a common Rule for all men, both great & small

small: and which is by him accounted necessary to bee beleived constantly by all. Concerning the which, that speech of *Hilary* also is much to the same effect; *'tis our safest and best course to hold fast that first & onely-Evangelicall Faith, which we made confession of at our Baptisme.* And to these fundamentall Trueths the Apostle (I beleive) had an eye, when he stiled *Titus, his owne sonne* [*ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ κυρίου*] *after the common Faith.* This common Faith laid downe in the Apostles Creed, proposeth to all Christians, to be beleived by them, the wonderfull Production of all creatures out of nothing, the unsearchable mysterie of the glorious Trinitie, the fruit & benefit that redound's to miserable sinners from the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and Glorification of Christ; &, what follow's thereupon, the Redemption of mankind, the Sanctification of the Elect, the Communion of Saints, the Remission of sins, the Resurrection of mens bodies, and the Glorifying of the Faithfull.

He that beleive's all which wee have here

*Ad Confut.
August.*

Tit. 1. 3.

here comprised in this short Creed, and endeavour's to lead his life according to the Commandements and Precepts of our Saviour Christ, cannot justly be denied the title of a Christian, nor expelled the fellowship and communion of any Christian Church whatsoever. On the other side, He that shall deny or oppose any one of the said Articles, although he arrogate to himselfe the name of a Christian, yet is he to be excluded and banished the society of all orthodoxe and sound Christians.

Besides these, there are (I confesse) many other Trueths contained in the Scriptures, and deducible from thence by good and solid consequence, which are very profitable to be knowne, and of singular use to further us in the knowledge of Divinity: but they are then only (and not otherwise) necessary to be beleived under paine of forfeiture of our salvation or communion with the Church, when 'tis clearely evidenced unto us that they are contained in Gods word, or may necessarily be inferred from it.

In

In these points therefore, if any particular Church cannot make the Truth which she her selfe beleive's, to cleare and manifest to other Churches, as thereby to winne them over to the same beleife, shee must forsake them in their Errours, but by no meanes may she (because of such errours) deny them her charity and Communion. I adde further, that if it should happen that two Churches should vary about some particular place of holy Writ, the one conceiving that it confirme's a fundamentall point of Faith, and the other thinking that it doth not so: yet is not such a difference as this a sufficient cause why they should fall at odds, and separate one from another; so long as they agree both of them in the Point it selfe, and acknowledge it to have cleare & solid foundation in other places of God's word. And last of all this may be added yet further, that 'tis not a thing impossible, nor any way contrary to the duty of good Christians, to entertaine a communion with those Churches which hold such a
C doctrine

doctrine as seemes to us inconsistent with some fundamentall Trueth, so that in the meane while they doe expressly beleive & professe that fundamentall Trueth it selfe. For 'tis utterly against all Charity, yea and Reason too, that a man should be thought (meerely for some consequences, which he neither apprehend's nor grants) to deny and reject a fundamentall point, which yet he strongly beleive's, expressly affirme's, yea and (if need so required) would not stick to seale the trueth of it with his dearest blood. How much truer and more charitable is that opinion of a grave and moderate Divine? *We must not* (saith he) *so much consider what will follow in the thing it selfe from every assertion, as what will follow from it in the apprehension and judgement of those who maintaine any such assertion as seeme's to us repugnant to some fundamentall point of Faith.* For as he who assent's to the trueth of some Principle, cannot therefore be said properly to beleive and understand whatsoever an abler Schollar can by consequences infer from that

Bucer.

that Principle; so neither can he who maintaine's a false Opinion, justly bee thought to hold all those absurdities which a nimble head easily observe's to adhere unto or follow upon that erroneous Opinion of his. We may indeed urge and presse these consequences upon our Brethren, to see if haply wee can by this meanes beat them off their errour; but maliciously to fasten them upon them, as though they were their profest Opinions, this we may not doe.

How farre this extend's, and of what excellent use it is to the settling of a brotherly union amongst the Reformed Churches, all wise men and such as unfainedly desire the peace of Gods Church, will easily perceive. For if it once be granted, that a Peace and Union is not impossible (that is, not unlawfull) save onely with such as actually disbeleive some fundamentall point of Faith, or maintaine some such Heresy as strike's at the heart of Religion, and cut's off the Abettors of it from having any communiō with Christ;

then will it follow, that betwixt a sound and a diseased Church, betwixt two Churches whereof one is more, the other lesse pure, there may be such a brotherly communion as we desire among the *Germane* Churches. Let therefore the Orthodoxe Churches separate themselves from all such as have plaid the Apostates & fallen away from fundamentall Faith; but let them not separate from thole which erre onely in points of lesser moment and such as doe not cut off the maintainers of them from being members of the mysticall body of Christ, the sole author and fountaine of our salvation. The Apostle command's us *to receive* (not, reject) *such as are weake in the Faith*: And the same Apostle tel's us how that *we which are strong, ought to beare the infirmities of the weake, & not to please our selves*. That Church therefore doe's but too much please & indulge her selfe, which despise's other Churches, as unworthy of her fellowship and communion, not for any Tyranny that they exercise, nor any Idolatry which they approve

Rom. 14. 1.

Rom. 15. 1.

prove or practise, nor any damnable Heresie which they maintaine, but meerely for some mistakes or infirmity of their knowledge. This was not the practise of the Fathers in the Primitive Church: whose care and diligence in procuring & preserving Peace amongst particular Churches disperst and scattered over the whole world, stand's upon record in Ecclesiasticall Storie and may be observed in each severall age of the Church. But of all other, that of *Optatus Milevitanus* fit's best to our purpose; *that all the Churches throughout the whole world were by the help and entercourse of those letters by them called [Formatæ] kept in one Communion and fellowship.* Now those [Formatæ] or Synodicall letters contained nothing at all save onely a bare Confession of the Catholike Faith delivered in their generall Creeds, and breifely explained afterwards in opposition to some Heretickes, by the unanimous consent of the Church universall met together in gene-

Magdeburg.

Lib. 2. cap. 7.

rall Councells held at *Nice, Chalcedon*, and other places. As for those infinite other questions which might be raised and debated amongst private Doctours of each side, no Church ever required or expected from others an absolute & universall consent therein. For if such an universall agreement in all points had been deemed so necessary as that Unity & Peace could not possibly have been maintained betwixt particular Churches without it, there would then have been more need of huge and high-swollne Volumes of Controversies, than of such breife Confessions and Synodicall letters as they made use of for that purpose.

But if wee refuse to learne of the ancient Fathers of the Church, yet let us at length learne thus much from our very adversaries, that it is not a thing impossible for severall Churches to live charitably and peaceably together, and use the same Service and Sacraments, although they differ one from another about some Controversies, wherein 'tis meerely in
vaine

vaine ever to look for an universall agreement. To say nothing of the contentions betwixt the *Thomists* and *Scotists*, neither of those between the *Dominicans* and *Jesuites*; there is one controversie hotly and violently disputed amongst Popish Churches, which, if taken single and by it selfe, is of greater moment than all ours put together; I meane that concerning the Infalible Judge in all matters of Faith: The Churches of *Spaine* and *Italy* will have the *Pope* to be this supreme Judge, authorised by Christ himselfe, and so farre illuminated and assisted with an infalible Spirit, as that he cannot possibly erre in such Decrees and Determinations as hee give's out with an intention to binde the whole Church: On the other side, the *French* Churches deny the *Pope* any such priviledge, throwing him downe from his Chaire of Infalibility, and making him liable to errour as well as other men; so farre forth that should he refuse to submit to the authoritie and judgement of a generall Councell, either in matters of
Faith

Faith or of Practice, they will tell you he's to be esteemed a Schismaticke and a Hereticke, and to be deposed thereupon. Behold here a great difference amongst them about the very foundation and the maine pillar of the whole Catholike Faith! And yet notwithstanding this so great a variety of opinions, they still hold together all of them in one and the same brotherly communion. O for *Sion's* sake let it not be told in *Gath*, nor published in the streets of *Ashkelon*, that the *Philistines* should be better affected and more desirous of Peace and Unity amongst themselves, than the *Israel* of God is.

Last of all, if an union may not consist with a diversity of Opinions in some controversies of lesser moment, I would gladly that any man would show me but two Churches in the whole Christian world (except they be such whereof one is subordinate to the other) which must not necessarily hereupon be divided, and as it were by a wall of partition separated from each other. Unlesse therefore we will grant,

grant, that a separation from other Churches is not to be made save onely upon a difference in Fundamentalls, the Communion of the Church Catholike (aunciently so much famed and talked of) will be found in the end to be nothing else but an aery and empty sound or name void of all trueth and reality. The *Donatists* of old were wont to say, that the Church was perished from off the whole earth save onely *from the part of Donatus*, in whom alone (they said) it was preserved: and our adversaries of *Rome* (herein right *Donatists*) tell us that the Church Catholike is of no larger extent than the *Romane*. As for our selves, it become's and behove's us to detest this Schismaticall and factious humour, and to foster and cherish a brotherly Communion with all such Christian Churches as neither Heresie nor Idolatry hath cut off from Christ our head, and such as have not exercised any usurped Tyranny over other Churches.

All that hath hitherto beene said touching the lets & hinderances which render

D

der

*August. de
unitate Eccl.
c. 12.*

der a Communion of severall Churches impossible, as also touching diversity of Opinions which may well consist with such a *Reconciliation*, saymes at this, that if once it were agreed upon amongst Divines that all those controversies whereabout the Reformed Churches have of a longtime busied and wearied themselves, are of that nature that a man may safely be of either opinion and still remaine in Christ, holding the substance of saving Faith without incurring any damnable Heresy, then must we needs grant, that an union and agreement amongst all Protestant Churches may be made and maintained notwithstanding all such Controversies, as being indeed not so properly any differences of our Churches as of our Schooles. It is not my purpose to enter the lists of those Controversies: onely I doe pray and earnestly intreat those learned & reverend Divines of *Germany*, that laying aside all passion & partialitie, they would in the spirit of meeknesse calmly and candidly discusse all those severall controversies

sies which are agitated amongst them: for if once we let loole the raines to Passion, Judgement must needs give place.

The maine controversie, and which indeed is the fountaine from whence all the rest in a manner are derived, is that which stands yet undecided concerning the manner how Christ's body and blood are present in the Eucharist. Touching which point the learned (a) *Bucer*, having well waighed the matter, give's in at last this verdict, *that they agreed in the thing it selfe; all the difference was meerely in words and manner of expression.* 'Twas once the speech of (b) *Luther*, if you beleive & teach that in the holy Supper the very body and the very blood of Christ is offered, given, and received, and not the bare signes of bread and wine, and that such receiving thereof is true and reall, not imaginary onely, the strife betwixt us is ended. At that very same time (c) *Bucer* & his Adherents granted, that the very body and blood of our Lord is offered, given, and received together with the visible signes of bread and wine. *Iacobus Andreas*

D 2

saith

(a) In *Epist. ad Luther.*

(b) *Contra Rober. Atrigen. & alibi. Hoß: in. Hist. Sacr. pag 144 ad An. 1536.*

(c) *Ibid.*

Colloq. Momp. pag 16.

faith, we neither hold with the Capernaïtes, nor admit of Popish Transubstantiation, nor maintain we any Physicall or locall presence and inclusion of Christs body and blood in the blessed Sacrament; nor doe we by those words [substantially, corporally, orally] understand any thing else but only a true & reall presence and participation of his body and blood in this Sacrament. Now let us heare the judgement of the Helvetians herein; Although they deny that there's any Transubstantiation of the Elements, or any locall inclusion of Christ's body in the bread, or any Conjunction of his body and blood with the outward elements remaining after the Sacrament is ended; yet they willingly grant that by vertue of a mysticall & sacramentall union the bread is Christ's body, & that his body is truly present and received together with the bread. I doe not knowe what two things can possibly be more like than is this Opinion of the Helvetians with that of the Lutherans. But if any man suspect that there may privily lurke a diversity of meanings under these so-concording expressions, yet are we

Hobin. Ann.
1536 p. 145.

we still to urge, and enquire whether that diversity be such and so great as to render the Peace and Union of those Churches utterly impossible, and to give just occasion for a perpetuall rent and division amongst them. I assure my selfe, learned & judicious Divines when they are out of the heat of Controversy, and look indifferently into the matter, will think farre otherwise of it.

Now as for those other Controversies, concerning *the ubiquity of Christ's body, the Communication of Properties*, & other such like, all springing from that former touching the Sacrament, he that doth seriously ponder with himselfe what is granted and what denied of each side, will easily perceive that neither the one nor the other doth so much as call in question, much lesse oppose or overthrow any necessary and fundamentall point of Faith: since both sides hold and professe whatsoever the Church Catholike in her Creeds and Generall Councils hath declared to be beleived in these points; and

whatsoever hath been by her in like manner condemned as erroneous, is equally rejected by both. But yet notwithstanding all this, that we see now and then some men catching at consequences, and taking advantage from thence to charge Heresy one upon another, it is a matter that deserve's not so much our wonder as our pitty: we all of us know, 'tis the common custome of hot and eager disputants, especially when through long agitation of the matter they are inflamed with choller and passion: and besides, I have already shewne in breife, what we are to think of such Heresies as are fastned upon men meerely for such consequences as they themselves neither apprehend nor grant. For the present, this alone may suffice to show the Possibility of a Reconciliation, that there's no one Opinion expressly maintained by either side, which is directly contrary to the substance of Faith, or *destructive of Salvation* [*salutis devoratorium*] to make use of *Tertullian's* expression: nay whatsoever is such, is plainly and expressly

presly condemned by both.

If of later times any new Differences have been raised amongst thole Churches touching *Predestination*, *Freewill*, and the like; these can no way be made a sufficient ground of Schisme and separation betwixt them. For in all these there is nothing of fundamentall and necessary beleife save onely this, that the free grace & goodnesse of God, in the Predestination of miserable men, in the conversion of sinfull men, in the freeing of their captivated wills, in a word, in the finall Perseverance and Salvation of his Elect, be so farre forth acknowledged and extoll'd, as that whatsoever makes any way for the enstating of them in grace and glory, and whatsoever is done by them in reference thereunto, all must be ascribed to the speciall grace and mercy of Almighty God: on the contrary, whatsoever concerne's the corruption of man's nature, his obstinacie in sinne, the pravitie and servitude of his corrupt will; in short, whatsoever præcipitate's & plunge's wretched men into Hell and everlasting

sting perdition,all this we must thank our selves & our sins for,& by no meanes impute any part of it to God. So long as these things stand firme and unshaken (as without doubt they doe) though in the meane time their manner of apprehensions and exprefions,yea though their Opinions be different in other points which are onely superstructions and belong not to the foundation.yet are not these of such moment as that a perpetuall Breach and Division should be made and continued betwixt whole Churches for such petty matters. If therefore this were but once agreed upon amongst Divines, that their jarres and contentions are not, nor ever were about any fundamentall points and such as are of absolute necessity to be known and beleived by all that will be saved,then must it also be granted for a manifest trueth, that 'tis no way impossible but an agreement and Communion may be established this dangerous Schilme utterly rooted out,and a blessed Peace setled and preserved amongst the *German* Churches.

ches. And thus having proved that a Reconciliation is possible, it remaines that in the next place we consider whether or no Princes, Doctors and Pastors of Gods Church, and in generall all Christians bee not bound in duty by the law of God, every man to endeavour according to his utmost power and ability that such an union may with all convenient speed be settled and established amongst the Reformed Churches.

1 And that all men are so bound, seeme's to be intimated by that of *S. Paul* which I alledged before; *if it be possible, & as much as in you lie's, live peaceably with all men.* If so great care and diligence must be had to maintaine a civill and externall peace with all sorts of men, then surely a spirituall & Ecclesiasticall peace amongst Christians is much rather to be sought after and preserved, where therefore there is no utter impossibility to hinder why such an Union may not be obtained, such men can in no wise be excused, who either out of negligence or wilfulnesse disobey

E bey

Math. 18.

bey the Commandements of God herein. Nor can any man justly here pretend that Discords and diversities of Opinions cannot as yet be composed and settled: for if it be possible that the Schisme it selfe & the Rent betwixt these Churches may be taken away, (as without all question it may) I had rather that a mil-stone were hanged about my neck, and that I were drowned in the depth of the Sea, than that I should willingly be any hinderance to so good a work, so well-pleasing to God, and so necessary to the removall of Scandall; nay than that I should not with my whole minde and might promote and further it.

2 To this may be further added, what must necessarily be confes't by all men, that a true and right order'd Charity is of as great necessity for the attaining of Salvation, to all Churches and to every particular member in any Church, as is the true and entire Profession of sound and saving Faith: our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus make's this the badge and cognizance whereby

whereby to distinguish and discern betwixt his true Disciples and such as are spurious and counterfeit; *by this shall all men know that yee are my Disciples, if yee love one another.* Now I leave it to every man's conscience to judge, what manner of Charity that is, which see's and suffer's Christian Churches (without all just cause and necessity) to stand still at distance and defiance one with another, and perpetually to shunne a Reconciliation and Union. Is it not enough for us to separate from the *hay and stubble*, I meane, from the Errors of other Churches, but must we by a voluntary separation forsake the Churches themselves which as yet have not forsaken Christ or his Truth?

Joh. 1335.

1. Cor. 3. 12.

3 Further yet, we see how that both *Zuinglians* and *Lutherans* (as they are usually termed) confesse that those Churches which hold with either side, doe notwithstanding still remaine true Christian Churches, & true members of the Church Catholike, whereof Christ is the head. The renowned Princes in their Preface

Ofiand. Antist.
pag. 75.

In Antist.
pag. 91.

prefix to the Forme of Agreement plainly professe, *that it was farre from their thoughts and intentions to condemne such persons as erred through the weaknesse of their judgement; provided that they did not defame and blaspheme God's Trueth; much lesse to condemne whole Churches, living either under the Roman Empire or elsewhere: nay they did not doubt but that there were many pious & religious men living in those Churches, though they agreed not with them in all Points of Religion.* Moreover, when it was objected to *Lucas Ofiander*, how that he had sometimes termed *Calvinists* the Diuel's Martyres, hee forthwith purged himselfe from that aspersiō thus; *They that have heard my Sermons, will say that they never heard from me any reproachfull termes against the blessed Martyrs of Christ: yea my owne writings published to the world will witnesse for me, that I termed those which were massacred in France on S. Bartholomewe's day, holy Martyres.* This then would be seriously thought upon, whether or no it will stand with the Policy, Piety, and the duty of Christian Churches

Churches, for every petty errour to deny the *right hand of fellowship* and brotherly love to those Churches, who in the mean time (notwithstanding such errors) may continue Christ's blessed Martyrs and holy Brethren. They who acknowledge Christ for their elder brother, must of necessity whether they will or no have all Christ's brethren joyned to them in a most sure and fast knot of consanguinity and communion.

Gal. 2.9.

4 Besides, I am very confident that both the *Saxon*, and *Helvetian*, &c all other Churches which joyne with either of those two, will professethat they desire to have and to retaine a brotherly Communion and Peace with this our Church of *England*, as also with the *Scottish*, *Irish*, and all other forraigne Churches of the Reformation. And truly we for our parts, although we doe not assent to them in all points of controverted Divinity, yet doe we account of them as our Brethren in Christ, and doe solemnely protest that we entertaine a holy and brotherly Commu-

nion with them. And if they be like affected towards us, with what reason then and equitie doe the *German* Churches deprive themselves of that brotherly Communion one with another, which yet they are not afraid to entertaine with forraigne Churches? What therefore *Moses* said long since to the two Israelites that were striving together, the same may truly be said to the *Germane* Churches quarrelling and contending one with another, but cannot so truly be disproved, *Sirs, yee are brethren, why doe yee wrong one to another.*

Act. 7. 16.

5 Last of all, that which all good men are bound to beg of Almighty God in their prayers to him, questionlesse they are bound likewise to imploy their best care and endeavours for the procuring of it. Now who is there that doe's not daily sollicite God for the flourishing and peaceable estate of his Church? Who is there that make's it not a part of his daily prayers, that God would be pleased to remove out of the way whatsoever doth disquiet and
disturbe

disturbe her peace, or any way let and hinder her spirituall growth and edification? This was King *David's* wish; & it should be the wish of all good Princes, and Divines, and generally of all Christians. Neither did *David* wish onely the happinesse and prosperity of Gods Church, but hee carefully sought to doe it good, and as much as in him lay he did procure and effect it. All this was but duty in him to doe, and can it be lesse then dutie in us?

Psal. 122. 9.

And here I should but trifle away the time, should I goe about to play the Orator and expresse at large to the *Germane* Churches, the blessings that accompany Peace & Unitie, & the many mileries & calamities of a long-continued Schisme and Division. That speech of *Prudentius* is a most certaine trueth,

-- scissura domestica turbat

Rem populi; titubatq; foris quod dissidit intus:
civill and intestine broiles alwaies prove the
undoing of a people; nor doe things ever goe
right abroad; when there is dissention at home.
 What may make most for the good and
 advantage

advantage of their Churches, let it be their care to consider; and resolve this with themselves, that what ever it be, it is not onely to be sought after with their prayers, but with the utmost diligence and endeavours of every one of them in particular. Neither let any unexperienced men amongst them thinke or hope, that they shall ingratiate themselves with Papiſts, and ſolive more peaceably by them and ſuffer leſſe harme from them, by reſuſing to enter into freindſhip and fellowſhip with *Calviniſts* (as they terme them.) What is to be hoped for & expected from them, we may learne from *Oſiander*; *Papiſts* (ſaith he) *ſpare neither Lutherans nor Zuinglians, but condemne both of them to fire and faggot, in all thoſe places where the Pope (that raging and ravenous beaſt of Rome) beare's rule and ſway.* They that are moſt in favour with them, can at beſt but hope for that kindneſſe from them which *Vlyſſes* (in *Homer*) obtained of *Polyphemus*,

In Antiſt.
pag. 74.

Od. 2.

[Οὐτὶν ἐγὼ πύματιν ἐδομαί μετ' εἰς ἐλπίδι.]
to be devoured laſt, after he had lookt on and
ſcene

*see*ne all his freinds and companions deuoured before him. They will perhaps destroy the Calvinists first, but the Lutherans must look to follow after them: none are like to escape in the end, if once the Papists have them at their mercy.

What hitherto hath been said, is to shew that a Communion and Reconciliation of the *Germane* Churches is a thing, not only possible, but in obedience to Gods commandement a necessary duty. It now remaines that I proceed to set downe the way and meanes whereby such a Reconciliation may be compassed, and the rents and distractions of the said Churches may with most conueniencie and speed be made up: which I shall doe, rather to testifie that vehement desire & zeale which I have to so good a work, than out of any opinion that those famous Churches (which alwaies have abounded with store of learned and pious Divines) can any way stand in need of advice herein from me or any other forraigne Divine whatsoever.

Seeing therefore that the fore-mentioned Controversies may be agitated either betwixt severall and distinct Churches, whereof one is no way subordinate to the other, or else betwixt such particular men as are members of the same Church, and subjects to one & the same Prince : J will speak first, of divers Churches independent one upon another, and afterwards of particular men in one & the same Church, and show how Peace and Unitie may be made and preserved amongst them.

For the first, I conceive there's no readier and better way for reducing of two different Churches to the same Communion, than is that usuall one of procuring a faire and peaceable Conference amongst Divines of both sides, authorized and appointed thereunto by their Princes. For if any one imagine, that a Councell being once held of all the Reformed Churches, there will out of hand within the compasse of some few moneths, or yeares, yea or in one age, an end be put to all disputes whatsoever, which have of a long time troubled

troubled and busied the Learned , so as that they shall all joyne and agree in the same opinion about all such points of controversie; this (with submission to better judgements) seemes to me very unlikely. For so dull and dim-sighted is the eye of our understanding, that it can hardly peirce into the depth of such subtle and intricate Questions , no not when it is alone, free and undisturbed in it's contemplations: but being distracted, by the stirs & tumults of disputation so far unable are we to penetrate into the quick of them, that many times we cannot so much as discerne and perceive them, no not when we look upon them with a fixt and steddy eye. And (to speak plainly what I conceive in this matter) the cheife use of Councells, especially of Generall Councells, is to maintaine and defend those necessary and plaine points of Faith against the oppositions of Hereticks, rather than to discusse or determine nice controversies of lesser moment and use.

To returne then to that faire & freind-

ly Conference, which but now I commended for the likeliest and fittest meanes of obtaining an Union : if it could be undertaken with such an intention, & managed in such sort, as it ought to be, wee have good cause to hope that we shall in a short time see a blessed Peace and Union established amongst the *German* Churches.

This therefore must carefully be remembered by all such as shall be present & parties to such a Meeting, that the end why they are called together, is not that like Adversaries they should strive for the mastery, but rather that they should like Brethren search out and make use of all lawfull and warrantable meanes for the settling of Peace and Unitie. For if once they fall a crossing and contending one with another, they will never be able to perswade, much lesse to procure any agreement betwixt such Churches as are at odds and opposition. Let them therefore carefully keep off and forbear to enter the intricate Labyrinths of ordinary disputes: and

& let their meeting aime at this one end, to make it appeare to their Churches, how that there's no just cause why they should any longer stand out and refuse to joyne hands and be united. To effect this, let it in the first place be set downe how farre the Church Catholike hath declared herselfe in each Controversie, what hath been by her defined and required to be beleived generally by all *sub Anathemate*. For about points fundamentall there may sometimes arise such doubts and disputes as are no way fundamentall: and such, as that the ancient Fathers of the Church, had they been raised in their times, would never have attempted a decision of them, to the hazard of breeding or fostering a Schisme betwixt severall Churches. For instance, that God is One in Essence, and Three in Persons distinguished one from another; that the Sonne is begotten of the Father; that the holy Ghost is the Spirit of both Father and Sonne; that these three Persons are coeternall and coequall; all these are fitly determined, and reckoned

in the number of Fundamentalls: but now if any man should peremptorily affirme and maintaine, that all those Schoole-nicities touching the manner of the Sonne's generation, and the proceſſion of the holy Ghoſt, are likewise fundamentall and of equall neceſſity with the former, & ought to be determined one way; that man ſhould deſerve but litle thanks from Chriſt and his Church, by ſuch his raſh and inconfiderate aſſertion. So likewise, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is both God and Man; that he hath both natures, divine and humane, inſeparably united in one Perſon; and that we have ſalvation onely by this God incarnate; all this is fundamentall, or rather 'tis that firme & immoveable foundation whereon the whole Catholike & ſaving Faith is built: but yet notwithstanding we muſt not think, that whatſoever may be queſtioned and debated about the ineffable manner of that union betwixt the two natures, or the manner how his body is preſent in the bleſſed Sacrament, as alſo concerning the Communication of

of Properties unto the humane nature by vertue of its union with the Divinity, or touching the actions and operations of his Humanity depending upon the said Union, wee must not (I say) imagine that all these belong to Fundamentall Faith, but rather to Theologicall Science, or perhaps not so neither, but onely to the vaine curiosity of some particular Divines. Let them therefore make this their first and maine businesse, carefully to distinguish betwixt fundamentall points and others that are not so; and let them not think, that whatsoever is appendant and bordering upon a fundamentall point, must therefore forthwith be it selfe fundamentall.

When this is once done; their next care must be that these fundamentalls be expressed and published after a breife and perspicuous manner, and propounded to the publike acceptation and approbation of all the Churches. *Certa semper sunt in paucis*, saith Tertullian; certaine and undoubted Trueths are not many, and they are such as may be delivered in a few words: whatsoever

is necessary for a Christian man's salvation to be knowne by him; and whatsoever is conducive to render us holy or eternally happy, it is all of it plaine and obvious. Here's no use either of subtle & acute distinctions, or of any long and tedious explications, which are oftentimes used not for the building up of Christians in the fundamentall faith, but rather to favour and further the different opinions of private Doctors. In a word, here's no use of any Metaphysicall formalities and abstracted notions; which serve only to perplex and confound the learned, and to deterre such as are unlearned from embracing the Catholike Faith; but doe not any way encline the hearts either of one or other to yeild assent and beleife to the fundamentall points of Faith.

After they have proceeded thus far, having drawn up a breife and plaine Forme of all such Points as are by them judged to appertain unto the substance of that *common Faith* which is necessary to be known and professed by all Churches; & having
passed

passed by & left undecided all such points as are not so generally received & agreed upon; in the next place, moderate & peaceable Divines should labour to exhort and perswade all the rest, that they would quietly lay aside all controversies and contentions about such points as good Christians may safely be ignorant of without hazard of their salvation; and that they would not quarrell any longer about the, to the danger of the Church, the losse of her Peace, and the scandall of Schisme which is thereby like to fall upon her.

Of what good use and necessity this advice is, may be clearely seen from the rashnesse of the Church of *Rome*, and her clean contrary practice herein: who being not content with those Articles delivered in the Apostles Creed, and *Nicene* Creed, will needs obtrude upon the Christian world those other new-coin'd Articles of the Trent-conventicle, and hath thereby ministred occasion of a perpetuall rent and Schisme amongst the Churches. How much more prudently did that blessed

G

Martyr

*Epist ad Ste-
phan & ad
Iubaian. Pref.
ad Concil.
Carthag.*

*Vid. August.
de Bapt. lib. 2.
cap. 45.*

Martyr and most learned Father of his Times, S. Cyprian behave himselfe? who professeth, *that he would not, for difference in opinion, contend or strive with any man; nor would he break the peace of our Lord with his Brethren, or cast off any man from his communion, because he was of a different mind from him.* By which his Christian charity and moderation, S. Cyprian (though in an error) deserved better of the Church than Stephen Bishop of Rome who was in the right, and did (by his unquiet spirit) as much as in him lay to rend and teare asunder the Churches. Thus warranted by the example of this blessed Martyr, and likewise by the judgement of S. Austin herein, I need not stick to affirme, that amongst the Doctors and Divines of Germany those who are in the error and yet are willing and desirous to retaine a brotherly Communion with the rest, are freer & further from Schisme in Gods sight, than they who are in the Trueth & withall disdaine and deny to entertaine such a Communiõ with other Churches which
seek

seek and sue for it. If therefore they can but get an universall consent in all Fundamentalls, though in other things there bee some difference amongst private Doctors, yet let them all joyne their votes and voices in this prayer to God, *nulla salus bello, pacem te poscimus omnes*; no safety can be had or hoped for in warre, therefore give peace in our time o Lord.

But if any here shall demand, what course is to be taken about such Controversies as cannot be decided and agreed upon, that they may not give any occasion whereby this Peace and Union of the Churches should be hindered, or being obtained should afterwards be disturbed and lost; I will set down some few rules, which to me seeme worthy the observation and practice of Divines on both sides.

First, that whatsoever tart and bitter passages have formerly slipt from Adversaries either by word or writing, amidst the heat of disputation, they should all be pardoned on both sides for the publike good, and for ever after buried in silence

and oblivion. And if it happen that any of those books and writings should afterwards be reprinted; before they passe the Presse, let them first be purged of all gall & bitternesse, which otherwise would but rub up and renew the old sore of strife & contention amongst brethren.

Secondly, Because no man can with patience heare himselfe branded with Heresie, heed must be taken that none be slandered with the name of *Nestorian*, *Eutychian*, or any other condemned Hereticke, so long as he doth expressly denie and disclaime the damnd Opinions of such Hereticks: seeing it is utterly impossible that ever they should continue firme in a brotherly Communion and concord, who for every petty difference in Opinion cease not by such reproachfull and reviling termes to provoke and exasperate one another. And it were to be wished further, that those siding names of *Lutherans*, *Zuinglians*, *Calvinists*, were all laid aside; which are badges rather of Faction than any fraternall Union, an such as the ancient

ent Fathers could never approve of. *Epiphanius* would not allow Christians to beare any *ἑτερονομία*, any other name added over & above to the name of *Christian*, but rest content with that. *Non Petrianos, non Paulinos vocari nos oportet, sed Christianos: ubi ought not to be called either Petrians, or Paulians, but Christians*, saith *Nazianzen*. But of all others *Lactantius* is the most severe and rigorous herein; *Christiani esse desierunt, qui Christi nomine omisso humana & externa vocabula induerunt: they have left off to be Christians, who take up forraigne titles and humane appellations instead of the name Christian*: though to say the truth, such names are rather fasten'd and father'd on particular Churches by others, than by themselves either desired or owned.

Thirdly, that all profound and controverted Points be let alone and not medled with in Sermons preached to the common people, or in any such books as are publisht in the Vulgar tongue; let them be accounted rather the exercise and busines

Epiph. Har.
42. & 70.

Nazian. Orat.
30.

Lactant. lib 4
cap. 30.

of the Schooles, than any fit food & nourishment for men's soules. Such perplex'd Disputes may very well be spared in the Pulpit; but Charity, which usually is impaired by the handling and discussing of them, cannot be spared or wanting amongst Christians, without the utmost danger and hazard of their soules. The common people doe but play and sport with such Controversies, they are no whit profited by them; and in the end, not well understanding them, they give over sporting, and fall a quarrelling and contending about them.

Last of all, if Divines shall hereafter have a minde to disperse or publish and Discourses about these Points, let them doe it according to that grave advice of *Greg. Nazianzen*, *ὅχι ὀπλιτικῶς ἀλλὰ λογικῶς*, with reasons, not revilings: let their aimes & intentions be, not to non-plus and baffle, but rather fairely and freindly to informe and reduce their straying brother into the way of Trueth. Hee that shall after this manner be brought to see and forsake his Error

*Orat. 3. de
Pasc.*

Error, will not thinke himselfe vanquished, but instructed; nor will he be abasht and asham'd, like one overmatcht & overcome by his Adversary, but rather rejoyce as one better'd and benefited by his brother. He that is a proficient is never ashamed.

Hitherto have I laid down the meanes and manner how an Union may be settled and continued betwixt severall and independent Churches. But because it may and often doth happen, that there are divers men, both learned and unlearned, living in the same Church and within the Dominions of the same Prince, whose consciences (whether rightly or misinformed) will not suffer them to subscribe to the common and more generally received Opinion in these Controversies; let us in the next place enquire, what course is best to be taken concerning such men.

And here, the Governours of each severall Church, if they have any regard & respect to the safety of their weak Brethren, they must see that they doe not intermixe
with

with the publike Confessions and Articles of Religion, which they would have received and assented unto by all such as live under their Jurisdiction, any curious and unnecessary Controversies, nor any decisions of nice and subtle Questions; but rather they must take care that such publike Confessions be framed and temper'd to the capacity of the common people, so as they may instruct & edify the ignorant, and promote the salvation of all. Herein they should doe well to consider the wisdom of our Fore-fathers; whose ancient Confessions (unlesse we corrupt & stufte them with new Opinions of our own, on purpose to disturb the publike Peace) no sober and discreet man will refuse to subscribe unto them. Neither is there any necessity why we should burden our publike Confessions with any such additions of our own; since God himselfe hath ordained to bring his people to heaven and happines, not through the rough & knotty paths of perplex'd & intricate Disputes, but by the smooth and compendious way of

of Faith & Charity. Why then such strifes and contentions about words? What make Schoole-nicities amongst Church-Confessions? *the Salvation of Christians is wholly placed in beleiving and serving God*, as that great *Athanasius* sometimes gravely spake.

In Orat. unum
cile Christum

Adde to this, that they will have much adoe to maintaine a firme peace with other Churches, who cease not to persecute men and expell them their Communion (as if they were Hereticks) onely because they maintain that Doctrine which those other Churches hold and professe: for in so doing, what doe they else but tacitly charge Heresy upon other Churches? whom though in word they acknowledge for their Brethren, yet they hereby shew that in their hearts they much disapprove and dislike them.

Lastly, unlesse the publike Confessions of Churches be cnoſined to such Points onely as are fundamentall and generally received by all the Reformed Churches, this inconvenience must of necessity fol-

H

low

low thereupon, that many learned, pious, and peaceable Ministers shall be driven out & disenabled from exercising the Ministry in those Churches wherein they live.

But if any man doubt, whether or no such men may lawfully entertaine a holy and spirituall Communion one with another in the same Church, who yet agree not amongst themselves in all Points of Divinity; this (as I conceive) is a matter out of all doubt and question. For as touching that blessed Communion which is betwixt Christians at the receiving of the Lord's Supper, it consist's cheifly in these particulars, that by the common bond of the blessed Spirit we are all united to that sole head of the Church Christ Jesus; that by the same Spirit, and by Faith and Charity we are united amongst our selves and linked together as it were into one body; that lastly, like men fed at the same table, we are all of us nourished up unto eternall life with the same quickning food, to wit the body and blood of Christ: in all these particulars

particulars doe they professe a Communion, whosoever approach and are admitted to that holy Table. But now as we doe not by this mutuall Communion professe our selves to have attained all of us either to perfection or to an equall measure of knowledge in Divinity: so neither doe we hereby professe, that there is an absolute and exact agreement amongst us about all Points of Divinity, or that we are all of us in one and the same Opinion about all Disputes and Controversies. If no Communion could be had amongst Christians, but upon such hard termes as these, I beleive it would hardly be found betwixt S. *Peter* and S. *Paul*; certaine I am the Church of *Corinth* must of necessitie have fallen in peices; and in these times of ours there would not easily be found many Divines of note and eminence, which could with a safe conscience communicate together at the same holy Sacrament and Supper of our Lord. It is therefore the duty of all Church-Governours (as being conscious to themselves of the common

infirmities of all men, both themselves & others) to take heed least while they exact of their People a too strict and punctuall Confession of more than what's necessary, they thereby wound and weaken the sweet Peace and Unity of Christendome, than which nothing more necessary. So much for Church-Governours.

Come we in the next place to such Ministers and other Christians of what state and condition soever, as desire to continue in the Communion of those Churches wherein they live, but yet their Consciences will not permit them to allow & professe all the common and received Opinions of the said Churches. Such men must see that they show themselves teachable and tractable, and not persist after a proud and pertinacious manner in defence of those Opinions wherein they dissent from their Church. Now such a one is to be accounted *teachable* and *tractable*, who lends a willing and attentive eare to the instructions and information of the Church; who doe's not dissent from her out of any
perverse

perverse and peevish humour, but meere-ly out of the weaknesse of his judgement, being not able in such profound Points to discern that Truth, which men of greater learning and more acute wits easily see and perceive. And because it is the peculiar prerogative of Almighty God to search the hearts, it behoves us Christians to encline alwaies to the more favourable and more charitable side; and, where we have not cleare and evident reasons for the contrary, we ought to judge of every man that he denies his assent rather out of conscience than contumacy and perverseness.

They who thus behave themselves, are not to be excluded and expelled the Communion of those Churches wherein they live, for petty mistakes and errors in their Opinions: but yet with this caution and condition, that they take not upon them to oppose the received Opinion of the Church, or to publish & spread their own private Opinion amongst the common people. Nor can they justly dislike of this

caution or take it ill, whoſoever have a deſire to live peaceably in the Communion of the Church: for admit that the private Opinion of ſome Divine or any other Chriſtian, be true; and the publike judgement of the Church, erroneous: yet nevertheless, if the Errour be ſuch as doe's not prejudice a Chriſtian man's ſalvation, it is much better that the true Opinion of any private man whatſoever ſhould quietly lie hid in ſilence and obſcurity, than that the publike authority of the Church ſhould be openly contemned and trampled on, or that the Church's Peace, by this unneceſſary conflict of jarring Opinions, as by two contrary windes, ſhould be ſhaken and torne in peices. But if any man be perſwaded in his conſcience, that his private Opinion wherein hee differ's from the Church, is of ſuch moment and importance as that men cannot be ſaved without the knowledge of it; ſuch a one, if he cannot perſwade and convince the Rulers and Governours of his Church in this matter, muſt either turne aſide into
ſome

some other Church, or else (for the good of men's soules) patiently submit to such censures as the Church in which he live's shall inflict upon him.

This is it (most learned Sir) which at your request I thought good to write and send unto you. If it may stand you or any man else in any steed for the advancing of the Churches Peace, I have all my wish & ayme for which I penned it. They who are better acquainted with the present state and affaires of the *Germane* Churches than I am, will be able (no doubt) to give you fuller and better advice herein. For my selfe, it remaine's onely that I humbly beseech Almighty God, that he would move and encline the hearts of Princes, earnestly to desire this blessed Union of our Churches; that he would enlighten the understandings of Divines to find out and follow after such meanes as may most conduce to the speedy establishing of it; that lastly he would enflame the hearts of all Christians to embrace this Peace, & bequeath it to all posterity. The God of
peace

Peace grant this for the sake of his deare
Sonne, the sole Author & procurer of our
Peace. To whom with the blessed Spi-
rit be all honour, glory, & thankes-
giving world without end.

A M E N.

THE





THE
OPINION OF THE
RIGHT REVEREND FA-
THER IN GOD THOMAS
MORTON Bishop of
DVRHAM,

Concerning
The Peace of the Church.

Worthy SIR,



CANNOT easily expresse
how much I was joyed
with those few leaves
which I lately receaved
from you; as soone as I un-
derstood how that there
was now at length some hopes of settling
a true and brotherly union betwixt Us &
those of *Germany* who hold the *Augustane*
Confession. For seeing that the very name
I of

of *Peace* is sweet and delightfome, much more the thing it selfe; especially if it be a Peace in Religion, which indeed comprehends in it all kinds of true Peace and Unity: I cannot chuse therefore but congratulate and joy you (Sir) with that good and truly-Apostolicall office which you now undergoe: an Employment which hath ever this successe, that it never can prove in vaine, or be altogether lost; for it will be sure either to redound to the good of him that receive's it (if it be embraced,) or else (if rejected) returne back againe into his bosome who proffer's it. Notwithstanding, I oblerve there are two maine Controversies set downe by you, which seem to let and hinder why wee cannot quickly be united and made one Church; the former is touching the *Eucharist*; the other, touching that involv'd and mysterious Point of *Predestination*. For the composing of which two Controversies, that you should desire my opinion, seeme's truly to me to be a course somewhat preposterous and out of order: rather wee should

should imitate (as I conceive) those expert Physitions, who sometimes cure one contrary by another: so likewise we, seeing that Discords in Opinion have bred disaffection and hatred in men's minds, 'twere necessary we should first endeavour that love and amity may be seated in the hearts and affections of men, that so we may the more easily allay their heat in disputation, and reconcile them in their much differing Opinions. To the promoting of this good work I neither can nor may be wanting. All that I shall say touching both Controversies, give me leave to glance at in three words; to wit, that the way & meanes of establishing an Union, to men of peaceable minds, is *easy*; to such as are lesse moderate, *'tis possible*; to both, *very necessary*.

The first T H E S I S.

That 'tis easy for peaceable and moderate men to be reconciled.

THis appeare's plainly from that love and freindship which was in times

past betwixt the Professors of both sides, notwithstanding that their differences in Opinion were then very rife. This is a Point of speciall moment, and therefore for prooffe of it we should not alledge the examples of any obscure men, but of such as were eminent and beyond all exception of both sides. Let them then (if they please) consult their *Luther*, *Melanchthon*, *Jacobus Andrea*, *Brentius*: Wee'l bring in our *Calvin*, *Bucer*, *Peter Martyr*, and *Zanchy*: all which sometimes shined in the Church of Christ like starres of the first magnitude.

First then, there are to be seene in *Calvin's* workes many excellent Elogies of *Luther*, even then when *Luther* did inveigh most bitterly against all our men in the Point of the Sacrament, and provoked them farre to repay him in his owne language. Whole passions, thereby moved & enflamed, *Calvin* with admirable prudence suppresseth & kept from breaking out: but I desire (saith he) you would consider, first what a worthy man *Luther* is, and with what excellent

Calvin. Epist.
57. *Bulling.*

excellent gifts qualified; with what courage & constancy, with what dexterity, with what successe and efficacy of his Doctrin he hath hitherto bent and bestir'd himselfe to lay wast the Kingdome of Antichrist, & maintaine the Doctrin of our Salvation: I have many times said, that should he call me Diuel, yet never thelesse I would still have so reverent an esteeme of him as to acknowledge him for a worthy servant of God. Thus Calvin: a saying so full of sweetnesse and moderation, as if not a man but humanity it selfe had spoken it. Not long after, he made use of the Apostles argument to containe & keep in our Divines, least waxing too hot and passionate, they should break out into revilings: it become's us (saith he) so to reprove what we finde amisse in him, as that we remit something out of an honourable respect to his rare endowments: let not therefore that befall us, which is denounced by S. Paul, that by biting and devouring one another we be consumed. Though he have provoked us, yet are wee rather to keep us quiet than to teare the wound widerto the publike danger and dammage of God's Church.

J 3

But

Calvin. tract.
2. defens. de
Sacram. Co-
muni.

But now how did *Luther* carry himselfe? was he so farre posselt with prejudice and passion, as to disdaine all commerce and societie with our men? Nay he refused not to enter into freindship with *Calvin* himselfe, though he knew him to be a stout Champion of our Sacramentary Cause. Let *Calvin* himselfe speake, if you please; *Notwithstanding Luther* (saith he) *in private was so farre from accounting me his enemy, that though he well knew my Opinion, ye refused he not to salute mee with reverence by letters writ with his owne hand, (for the dishonesty of Westphalus forceth mee to speake thus foolishly, so as to relate it in the very same expression which he himselfe used.)* Afterwards, when the Agreement was halfe finished at *Marpurge*, and they were not yet departed from that meeting, he affirmed's that he retained the same esteeme of *Oecolampadius* and *Zuinglius* as he formerly had done and he did there solemnly promise to account and respect them henceforth as Brethren.

Secondly, what an intimate freindship
and

& familiarity there was betwixt Melanchthon, Jacobus Andrea, Brennius, and our Divines, the mutuall Salutations which passed betwixt them can abundantly witness: Melanchthon writing to Calvin, begins his Letter after this manner; *Reverend and Christian Brother, I trust we shall have a time to meet and conferre together.* And afterwards concluding, *I beseech the Sonne of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Guardian and keeper of his Church, that he would guide and protect Thee and us All. Farewell most deare Brother.* Besides, what was observed concerning Melanchthon & others by our Sturmius, he himselfe will by no meanes conceale from us; as though (saith he) Philip Melanchthon did not impart his Opinion (touching the Sacrament) to Peter Martyr, afterwards, to divers others: with whom he still continued in love and freindschip. Further, Jacobus Andrea and Brennius did unanimously adhere to the Opinion of Luther concerning the Eucharist, of whom notwithstanding Calvin thus speaks; *your Letters, worthy Sir and my much honoured Brother* (speaking

Melanchthon
Calvino, inter
Epistolae Cal-
vini, 187.

Iob. Sturmius
Ep. ad Princ.
Freder. inter
Calvini Ep.
304.

Calvin. Epist.
240. Iacob.
Andrea. Ep.
Epist. 32. Fa-
vello.

(speaking to *Jacobus Andrea*) were not a little welcome to me, for as much as I understand by them how that amidst these sad and unhappy contentions, wherein I am most unwillingly engaged, you still continue like affected towards me as heretofore you have been. Again, this your moderation of mind I embrace & highly applaud. Farewell worthy Sir, and my much respected Brother. I wish all happiness to *Brentius*. God Almighty ever guide and direct you by his blessed spirit, strengthen and sustain you by his power, and shower downe his blessings in abundance upon you. And again, in another Letter, *Brentius* salute's you. Thus were matters carried amongst the: and why should not We, putting on bowells of meeknesse, tread the steps of these Worthies? Shall they breath out nothing but mildnesse and sweetnesse, and wee nought but rage and fury? God forbid. I have done with the first *Thesis*; I now proceed to the second.

The

The second THESIS.

That 'tis possible for the most hot and rigorous spirits to be reconciled and agreed.

GIve mee leave to make use of that Maxime of *Aristotle*, so frequently used in the Schooles; but in a sense somewhat different --- *Quæ conveniunt in eodem Tertio, inter se conveniunt*: such two things as agree in any one third, agree likewise betwixt themselves. In like manner, I conceive that though we differ much in our Opinions about the Eucharist, yet there are still remaining amongst us some common Principles and certaine notes or notions out of which any one who is not blinded with prejudice may draw an assertion. One is, the authority of Scripture, sufficient of it selfe to challenge a beleife: a second is, the cleare light of Antiquity, as cleare as the Sunne at mid-day. But this is no fit place to discourse at large upon these. Three o-

K

ther

ther there are which in no wise may bee passed over, seing they are such as are more proper and peculiar to the two aduerse parts. I wil begin with the first of the. The *Augustane* Confession is by the Divines of *Saxony* esteemed as an Oracle, of undeniable and unquestionable authority; now if our men allow and approve of that Confession, I doe not see what can possibly make more for the obtaining of a Reconciliation. And for certaine *Calvin* herein agrees with them: *I desire* (saith hee) *as much as any man a sincere and true union, so it be such as God hath approved in his word: nor doe I reject the Augustane Confession; whereunto I did once wittingly and willingly subscribe, according to that interpretation which the Author thereof himselfe put upon it. Again, I affirme* (saith hee) *that in that Confession, as it was printed at Ratisbon, there's not so much as one word which is contrary to our Doctrine: and if there be any ambiguity to be met with in the sense, none is more fit to be the Interpreter of it than the Author himselfe, whose worth will easily obtaine him that*

*Calvin. Epist.
236. Martino
schalingio
Eccles. Ratis.
Pastori.*

*Calv. Opusc.
traict de sens. 2
de Sacram.
Cane.*

that honour with all pious and learned men. So He. Neither is he singular in this: but others there are, though of the same Opinion with him concerning the Eucharist, who will grant as much. (a) *I am of the number of those (saith John Sturmius) who concerning the receiving of the body & blood of Christ approve of the Augustane Confession.* Hierome Zanchy hath a desire to bring in his verdict too, (b) *I professe (saith hee) that as often as I had occasion to speake any thing about this Point, I did alwaies containe my selfe within the compasse of these three heads: the first whereof is, that in the Lord's Supper not onely bread and wine, but the very body and blood of our Lord is truely offered us by Christ, and likewise truely received, truely eaten and drunke by us. The second, but this is done not by the mouth and teeth of our body, but by a true and an actuall faith. The last, that therefore this is done by beleivers onely, and by none others. Now these heads are taken out of God's word, nor are they repugnant to the Augustane Confession. These things being so, those worthy men have the more*

(a) Ep. Sturmius ad Fred. Princ. inter Epist. Calvin.

304.
(b) Zanch. Miscel. tract. de Cæna Domini Confess. ad Magistrat.

reason to be entreated by us, that besides the laid *Augustane* Confession (which was anciently framed and ordained to be the common rule of Faith for all *Protestants*, whereby they might be distinguished from *Papists*) they would not obtrude upon us any other private Opinions of their own, to the hinderance of the public Peace.

A second Principle of the like nature, which even Reason it selfe doth dictate, is this; that no Antecedent is to be urged and pressed, the necessary consequent and sequell whereof may not bee granted by us. But now it is well knowne, that *Luther*, to remove out of the way the perill of Idolatry, did abolish all (a) worshipping at the celebration of the *Eucharist*, which had formerly been practised; and for the same end he abolished the elevation of the host also; that (b) *Brentius* likewise did with much earnestnesse oppose their *Breaden God*, (for so hee himselfe terme's it;) lastly, that (c) *Melanchthon* did reject their *Bread-worship* in the Lord's Supper. Those

(a) *Ep. Sturmiique extat inter Calvini Epist. 304. & Epist. 45. quæ est Sultzer. ib.*

(b) *Calvin. Epist. 32. Farello.*

(c) *Melanch. Epist. Calvin. quæ inter Ep. 187.*

Those godly and learned men therefore are to be entreated, that they would well weigh with themselves whether or no these same abuses which They with so great applaule cryed down and abhorred, be not for all that the genuine offspring of that *Vbiquity* which at this day is maintained by them.

Thirdly, least any man haply should pretend, that no whit is to bee abated of that bitterneffe and rigour wherewith at first they exercised the patience of *Occolampadiu*, and *Zuingliu*, they are againe to be intreated that in their great wisedomes they would herein take notice of a vast difference. *Ananias*, in the ninth of the *Acts*, when first he was warned in a Vision to put his hands upon Saul, he was somewhat unwilling to doe it; *I have heard* (saith he) *by many of this man &c.* but afterwards, having better understood the counsell and purpose of God, he gladly embrace's him, saying, *Brother Saul, the Lord hath sent mee unto thee.* The very same might have been heretofore observed in the carriage of Lu-

ther himselfe towards Zuinglius and Oecolampadius; whom at first hee fell upon roughly, when he heard that they held there was nothing in the *Eucharist* save only bare signes and figures: but afterwards, having further examined their meaning, he kindly & courteously reacht out the right hand of fellowship unto them. After the very same manner did Calvin likewise stand affected towards them, as he himselfe confesseth; *when at my first entrance (saith hee) into the cleare sun-shine of the Gospell out of Popish darknes, I read in Luther how that Oecolampadius and Zuinglius would admit of nothing in the Sacraments but bare and empty figures, this (I confesse) so farre possesse me with a prejudice against their writings, that I refrained a long time from reading them.* Thus spake Calvin at that time of those men, whom notwithstanding he afterwards had in great love and familiarity with him. Why may not then the *Saxon* Divines be pleased to shew themselves *Luthers* towards us, so long as they finde us not inferiour to Oecolampadius

Calv. Opus.
Defens. 2. de
Sacram. Cœnæ

colampadius and Zuingliu in this Point ?

The third T H E S I S.

*That this freindly Vnion and Reconcilement
we wish for , is very necessary for all
men, whether of a milde or turbu-
lent disposition.*

IT is not my purpose to lash out into
Common places, wherein much paines
might be spent, and litle or no benefit got
by it. It behoves me rather to provide me
of such arguments, as may, not coldly beg
and intreat, but command, and as it were
violently compell men to live at peace and
unity amongst themselves. Neither are
there any (as you well know) fitter for the
setling and confirming of such a Commu-
nion, than are those which are drawne
from the common joy, or greife; the com-
mon danger, or the common good & ad-
vantage of both sides. There's not a more
evident and infallible signe of a true mem-
ber of Christ, than to compassionate or to
have a fellow-feeling one of another;
which

which is seene especially in two things: first, in rejoycing at the hopes of a Reconciliation; such as was the Psalmist's joy in that divine acclamation of his at the unity of Brethren, *ô how good and joyfull a thing it is!* Secondly, a sorrow of heart at so long and wearisome a dissention; such as the Jewes expressed by their *great thoughts of heart for the divisions of Reuben*. Schisme growing and getting upon the Church at *Corinth*, the Apostle exhort's them to bee [*κατηρησάσθαι*] perfectly joyned together in the same minde and in the same judgement: the word is derived frō *ἀπὸ*, which amongst Physitions signifies to set right againe such members as are out of joynt. The same Apostle, that he might compose and setle the mindes of the *Philippians*, *ô what a sacred charme doe's he make use of!* If (saith he) *there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowells of mercies, fulfill my joy. But how may they doe that? He goes on; that yee be like minded, having the same love,* [*τὸ αὐτὸ ἔχει ἐν φρονήσεσιν*] *being of one accord,*
of

of *one mind*. I verily beleive, that Eloquence
 her selfe, if she had a tongue to speake, she
 could not have spoke more emphatically:
 where each word is a sharp dart, peircing
 and wounding our very hearts and soules.
 I will adde onely that long chaine of *Vni-
 ties* in the same Apostle to the *Ephesians*;
one body, one spirit, one hope, one calling, one
Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme, one God and
Father of all: all which make for that *one*
 thing which he there aime's at, to wit,
 that the *Ephesians* should endeavour to keep
the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

As touching the danger, we all of us
 know that the tyranny of the Romish An-
 tichrist hang's over our heads: who
 sweetly sing's to himselfe that blacke and
 fatall Maxime [*divide & impera*] set them
once at variance, and then you may quickly
master them; or rather, by setting them at
 variance, you may confound and tumble
 them into the pit of hell: for the king-
 dome being once divided, Hell it selfe
 cannot stand. Let us learn to be wise from
 the examples of others: the *Guelphi* and

L

Gibellini

Gibellini [those two implacable and irreconcilable Factions] did agree together and joyned their forces, when the common Enemy came against them. and shall not we rowse our selves up to save & defend our selves?

This is the
Title of that
Confession.

As for the gaine and advantage I mentiond, can there be any greater gaine than Salvation? and yet even this too, the more common, the greater and better it is. Let us then (I beseech you for the love of God) set before our eyes the Greek Church, which now seeme's to sue and wooe to us for a brotherly union and agreement, as appeare's from that *Confession of Faith lately set forth in the name of all the Eastern Churches by the right Reverend Father Cyrill Patriarch of Constantinople*: which agrees exactly with our *Protestant* Confessions in every Article set forth and published by him. Me thinks I see this most ample & farre spreading part of the Christian world ready to fly into our armes & embraces presently upon the first newes of our unity and agreement amongst our selves

selves: which hope of ours should Christ be pleased to crowne with successe, this alone would farre outvie and surpasse in glory all the triumphs and trophies of all the Emperours in the world. But I hasten to your other Question.

The other CONTROVERSY.

*Concerning that unfathom'd mystery of
Prædestination upon the foresight
of Faith and Workes.*

THIS is that other Question (as I gather from your Letter) whereon as on a rock divers men (otherwise desirous of Peace) have dasht and split themselves. That therefore men may knowe, I have not of my owne accord sought after and catcht at this opportunity to dispute, but rather am cast upon it against my will, my proceeding herein shall be not by way of disputation, but (as the Times rather require) by way of exhortation & advice.

I hope therefore the learned Divines of Saxony will take this my advice in good

part, wherein I earnestly pray and beseech them, first, that they would be reconciled to their owne *Luther* in this Point, who (as it did well become a child of Grace) did constantly hold and maintaine that the Grace of God is every way free and gratuitous. Next, that they would not, in the patronizing and vindicating of Divine Grace, suffer themselves to be outstript by Papists, nay Jesuites, and the prime Doctors too of that sect, *Bellarmino, Tolet, Pererius, Suarez, Salmeron, Maldonat*: who have all of them exploded this Doctrine of *Prædestination upon the foresight of Faith and Workes*, as pure *Pelagianisme*. Last of all, it is some wildome for a man to profit by his enemy: there came out a book two yeares ago, written by *Will: de Gibieusse*, of the *Oratorian Order*, Priest and Doctor of the *Sorbon*, dedicated to the present Pope *Urban*: wherein are inserted the words of Pope *Clement* the eighth concerning the *Auxilia Gratiæ*: the summe whereof is this; *that this whole Doctrine ought to be squared and conformed to S. Austin's*

Guilt de Gibieusse de libertate Dei & Creaturae.

stin's judgement in the Point of Grace; that the same S. Austin ought be acknowledged and followed as a guide and leader, forasmuch as that good Father seeme's to have omitted nothing which concerns the said Controversies: and because (saith he) many of our Predecessours have stood up so stoutly for that Doctrine of S. Austin concerning Grace as if they desired to have it continued in the Church as her right of inheritance, it is not meet I should suffer her to be deprived of this her patrimony. Thus farre that Pope: unto whose judgement (I will not say, for the authority, but the trueth of it) I nothing doubt but Calvin himselfe, were he now living, would subscribe: And he that shall read Calvin's writings, will quickly grant, that in these Controversies he had more than an ordinary share of S. Austin's Legacy.

Thus you see, Sir, how that partly your importunity (who are such an earnest Factor for Peace) and partly my own zeale in so necessary a Cause, have made me exceed the accustomed bounds of a Letter. wherein, if you finde not much judge-

ment, yet may you behold my care & desires for Christian Peace. The author of all true peace, our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen and enable you by the power of his holy spirit cheerefully to goe thorough with this so waighly an employment for the publike Peace of his Church. Farewell.

THOMAS DURHAM.

Postscript.

That we should thus first seek and sue for brotherly love & unity, is so farre from being any prejudice to our cause, as that it is rather to be counted an honour to us: in that we herein follow the precept and practice of God himselfe; of whom the Evangelist saith, 1. Joh. 4. 10. He first loved us.



THE
OPINION OF THE
RIGHT REVEREND FA-
THER IN GOD IOSEPH
HALL Bishop of
EXETER.

These Articles of Religion wherein the Divines of both sides doe fully agree, are abundantly sufficient, both for a Christian man's salvation, and likewise for the establishing of a firme & lasting Peace in the Churches of God. As for the rest, I would not have them reckoned amongst the Apostle's [*ἀναιδύτως ἐν- τὸν*] foolish Questions: doubtlesse they are such as may perhaps not unfitly bee sent to the Divinity-Schooles, there to bee thoroughly discussed: but by no meanes ought

ought they to disquiet the Peace either of any Christian soule , or of God's holy Church. What doe we professing Christian Charity and love, if we still obstinately refuse to indulge our Brethren this litle liberty of dissenting from us in doubtfull & difficult Schoole-questions? Seeing wee know very well that our good and gracious Saviour passed over with silence and toleration great and greivous Errours in comparison of these (if it be granted that these are Errours,) and that too even in such as were of his owne household and retinue.

There are but three things about which the reverend Divines of both sides profess themselves to differ.

THE first is, whether or no our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be truly omniscient, omnipotent , and omnipresent, not only according to his Divinity, but also according to his humane nature, by vertue of the personall Union? That the Lord
Jesus

Jesus (to wit God and Man) is in both his natures omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, is confessed on each side: this being granted, the word [*according*] is a meere Schoole-nicity. How farre the vertue of that hypostaticall union extend's it selfe, the holy ghost is silent, and a Christian may safely be ignorant of it. Let the Doctors, if they list, dispute and busie their braines as much as they please about this matter: it will be enough for a Christian, to knowe that he hath a Saviour who is both God and man, to whom all these attributes truely belong and appertaine. Nay even Divines themselves have enough wherein they may rest satisfied, so long as this be granted on both sides, that even the humane nature considered personally is omniscient, omnipresent, & omnipotent: which wee all of us roundly and readily professe without any doubt or scruple. O what enemies are we to Peace, if we will yet needs quarrell amongst our selves! In all this, I wish we would carefully remember that usefull distinction of *John*

M

Gerson,

*Gerſon eſſe quadam de neceſſitate fidei, quadam verò de fidei devotione: that there are ſome things eſſentiall and neceſſary to Faith, other ſome things which ſhee piously and devoutly beleives, but yet they are not of ſuch neceſſity as the other: the former are ſuch as may not ſo much as bee once doubted of, but theſe latter may admit of an *inigo*; we may ſafely either ſuſpend our aſſent unto them, or poſitively diſſent from them.*

The ſecond Article wherein they differ, is concerning the manner of receiving Chriſt in the *Eucharift*. Both agree, that Chriſt's body is truly and really given, taken, and eaten in this Sacrament together with the outward Elements: All the queſtion is concerning *Unworthy receivers*. An unworthy Queſtion truly it is, that the publike Peace ſhould any way be diſturbed about it. We willingly grant both of us, that even ſuch as are *Unworthy* doe eat that which by a ſacramentall Union is Chriſt's body; and that therefore they are guilty of the body and blood of Jeſus Chriſt.

Christ: What doe wee now making any more adoe about the manner of their eating, whether it be *Orall* or not? Let Christians make this their care, that they themselves may be found worthy Communicants, and let them not trouble themselves to knowe how those which are unworthy are partakers of Christ. How farre the vertue of that Sacramental Union extends it selfe, and whether the manner of this eating be *Orall* or *Spirituell*, let the Schools dispute it: Christians need not be too curious in enquiring after it; nor is it fit wee should disquiet the Churches Peace, by refusing to indulge mutually one another a liberty of Opinion in such nice Points.

The third Article is that fatall Point of *Prædestination*: about which, Divines of both sides expresse themselves variouly, but yet modestly and discreetly. In many things, and such as are of most moment, their judgements on both sides are the same: as, that election is most free, & proceeding from the meere mercy of God; that God found not any cause or occasion

in those whom hee elected, the sight whereof might move him to chuse them rather than others: but that he did from all eternity reprobate and prædestinate to eternall damnation such as persevere and persist in their sinnes and infidelity; not by any rigid and absolute decree, without having any respect or regard to sin, but out of his most just judgement: so as all the cause & the blame of it ought to be sought for in the men themselves. In this they are at a stand; that the foresight of Faith and Perseverance is by the reverend Divines of *Saxony* placed before the act of God's Election: so as God did from everlasting foreordaine such as he fore-saw would in time beleive, &c. Certainly of all the Questions about Prædestination, this concerning the order of his Decree is least materiall. seeing we know assuredly that the infinite & all-wile disposer of things performes all this with one single & most simple act. There is nothing more certain than that God did foresee who would beleive, and that he did prædestinate such as should

should be saved: let but this then be granted (which they of *Saxony* willingly professe) that Faith is the sole gift of God, and that whatsoever good there is in the Elect; all of it doth originally proceed from the free grace & meere mercy of God, which was bestowed on them in Jesus Christ from all Eternity; I say, let this be granted, and doubtlesse there can be no danger in that Opinion of *Prævision* or fore-sight: God from everlasting fore-saw that, which he himselfe from everlasting decreed to bestow in time upon such as should beleive. All this is sound and safe, nor is there any cause why any further strife & contention should be made here about.

In all this, I embrace and applaud this Christian and brotherly moderation and holy desires of Peace: thus it becomes Christians, thus it becomes Divines. I am much deceived, if this modest and seasonable appeasing and calming of men's minds doe's not promise a firme and perpetuall Peace to God's Church. Thou

God of Peace, in thy good time accomplish it: give care to the prayers of thy People, and grant that all Christians may be of one heart and one way, till at length we come, by Thee who art the Way, to Thee who art the Life. *Amen, Amen.*

From the Palace at

Exceter. Febr. 25.

1634.

*Which is the humble, daily,
and devout prayer of*

JOS: EXON:

m-
thy
may
gh
, to

ily,

N:



Afterwards the same M^r John Dury sent unto the L^d Bishop of Exceter a Coppy of a certaine piow and peaceable Decree, made & published by a generall vote at a publike Meeting of the States in Franckfort: requesting his Opinion concerning the meanes and manner how this good worke might be advanced: whereunto he had returned him this Answer.

TO





TO
HIS MOST FAITH-
full, learned, and loving freind
M^r JOHN DUR Y, all
happinesse.

SIR,

I Have read over, with a
great deale of delight,
the Transcript you sent
me of that Decree for
Peace, which was lately
signed by all the Prote-
stant States and Delegates assembled at
Franchfort: than which Decree, nothing
(in my Opinion) could possibly have
been devised more full of prudence and re-
ligion: nor doe I see (as the case now
stand's) what more could be once hoped
for; or what could possibly have been
N proposed

proposed and resolved upon that might more conduce to the advancement of the publike Peace, which all good men so much wish and desire. Thus it was meet that the holy Citizens of God's Church, that pious Princes and Peeres should thus carefully provide for the Peace and safety of Christendome And blessed be God, the bestower of every good gift, the Author of Peace, who did put into their noble hearts those holy desires and purposes: may the same good God be pleased, at length to finish this his owne work so hopefully begun, and crowne it with successe. And truly neither our prayers nor our utmost endeavours shall ever be wanting hereunto: neither know I well upon what hopes it is, but methinkes my mind doth confidently promise and praesage a happy issue to this holy enterprise. For indeed what a small and slender hedge is it, which now divides and part's us? We doe all of us of the Reformation, receive and approve the same Scriptures, the same Creeds, the same *Augustane* Confession: onely in one Article

cle the sense is so doubtfully expressed, that the Author himselfe did not thinke it safe to adhere to the letter of it. The foundation of the Christian Faith is, amongst us all, one and the same, entire and unshaken; there's not so much as one stone in it, or the least peice of cœment, about which any question either is or can be made. Upon this Foundation there are built certain Points of Schoole-divinity, about which alone we so hotly contend: but what are these to a Christian? What are these to Salvation? In what a safe and quiet state might the affaires of Christendome have been, if such nice Disputes of curious and over-busie heads had never been heard of; if learned men could have contented themselves with some generall formes of expressing the Trueth, and not presently to have sifted Divinity so over-nearly as they have done?

But seeing these strifes, which are not onely unprofitable, but very hurtfull and prejudiciall to both sides, are thus unfortunately raised; what better advice can be

thought upon for the setting and composing of these stirres, than that the Faith be brought back againe to its primitive simplicitie and plainenesse, by the publike authority and joynt consent of the Christian Church? And that in this confused mixture and multiplicity of matters of beleife, the Christian world be taught warily to distinguish betwixt the genuine and proper Articles of Faith, and the lesse necessary additions of Schoole-conclusions: which truely in this very businesse is a matter of no great difficulty to performe. This especially is fundamentall, *Christ is both God and Man*; and so likewise this, *Christ, God and Man, is truely omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent*: now if any shall adde further, *Jesús Christ, according to his humane nature, is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent*; truely that word [*according*] seemes to be farre off from the Foundation; 'tis a Scholasticall notion, and to be turned over to profest Divines; but it is not fit the Salvation of plaine and illiterate Christians should be made to hang and depend upon such a
subtle

subtle and nice Point as this is. Can these knowe, or are they bound to know, how farre the vertue of the hypostaticall Union extend's it selfe, or what the bounds are either of those faculties or operations which flow from that union of the two natures? Certainly if God had intended this for a necessary Point to be knowne by all men, he would not so sparingly and obscurely have revealed unto his Church a mystery so fundamentall and important. I dispute not the trueth of the Point, (nor is this pertinent to my purpose,) onely I question whether it be of necessity to be beleived. Let us view a comparison betwixt things humane & divine, although what similitude can there bee'twixt Earth and Heaven? Man consists of a soule and a body united one to the other: and yet notwithstanding, each part hath its severall properties and actions, which are usually attributed (and that very rightly too) to the whole; the whole man hath the use of sense, doth understand, eat, walke, sleep, dye: thus much even sense & reason doth

unanswerably evince: will any man hereupon say, that this also is of equall necessity to be knowne, *man according to his body hath the use of sense and reason; and according to his soule he doth eat, walke, sleep, and dye?* Truly the same that Reason is, in respect of intelligible matters; the same is Faith, in things spirituall and divine: I am not ignorant, how much they differ in their Subjects; yet neverthelesse the necessity of the things which are either to be known or beleived, is alike different in both. Such Truths therefore as are certaine, such as are necessarily to be beleived, and apparently fundamentall, let us all unanimously embrace and professe them: as for the rest, let Divines (if they please) busie their heads with them, but let not the plaine & common sort of Christians trouble themselves about them more than needs. But if it may seeme to make any thing for the publike Peace, that we come as neare as we can one to another in the formes and manner of expresseion; let us but say (as *Hier. Zanchy sometimes alledged out of

* Zanch. Iudicio de dissidio Cene in sine Miscellaneorum Quod idem probatur à Zuinglio ibidem citato.
Fid. etiam Feildium nostratem, in lib. de Eccles. et Appendice.
Fid. lib. 3. de Ecclesia. c. 35. et 42. et Append. part. 1. respons. ad secundum caput Higgonii. Vbi etiam citantur Pic. Miran. l. Caie. tanus, alii.

Innocent and the Schoole-men) that even Christ's humane nature according to its personall essence is omnipresent, &c. and I see no reason why both sides may not, nay will not readily consent and agree to it. Here let us fixe, let neither side proceed any further beyond this, and wee are safe.

In the Point of the Sacrament this is certaine and fundamentall, that the true and essentiall body and blood of Christ is truly present, offered, and received in that holy Supper; but whether or no it be corporally present in the Bread & Wine, whether or no (by a supernaturall vertue of the consecrated Elements) it be orally received and eaten, even by wicked and unworthy Communicants, this is a matter of Theologicall Dispute, and such as (in the judgement of *Luther*, *Melanchihon*, *Iustus Jonas*, *Osiander*, *Brentius*, *Stephanus Agricola*, yea & of *Oecolampadius*, *Zuinglius*, *Bucer*, *Hedio*) ought not to infringe Christian love and Charity. And upon this promising signe was begun that fa-

mous

mous Agreement at *Marpurge*, in the yeare 1529. That likewise is well worthy to be kept in perpetuall memory, which is related concerning the meeting at *Witemberge*, in the yeare 1536, by *Ludovicus Rabus* Pastor at *Ulme*, in his History of Martyrs: with whom agree's *John Swiccius*, Pastor at *Constance* (cited by *Hospinian*) who was there present at that time; and 'tis to be seen likewise in the English writings of *Bucer*: there were present at that Meeting, of the one side, *Capito*, *Bucer*, *Musculus*, and the rest of the more eminent Divines out of the cheife Imperiall Cities in high *Germany*; of the other side, *Luther*, *Philip*, *Jonas*, *Pomeranus*, *Cruciger*, with other Doctors & Preachers of *Witemberge*: and after some expostulations, and divers Speeches to and fro, wherein both sides freely & fairely delivered their Opinions, at length *Luther* (stepping a litle aside with his Associates, and conferring with them about it) concluded with these words; *If yee beleive and teach, that in the holy Supper the very body and the very blood*
of

of Christ is offered, given, and received, and not the bare signes bread and Wine; and that such giving and receiving is true and real, not onely imaginary, the strife betwixt us is at an end, and we doe acknowledge & receive you as our deare Brethren in the Lord. All this, Bucer, Capito, and the rest, plainly and freely affirmed: whereupon they joyned hands, and so parted. Indeed the waters were then calme and quiet, not tossed with any stormy and tempestuous winds; and therefore they did clearely shew and represent the face of Trueth. Why doe not we inlike manner now at last begin to be wise? And having passed those tempestuous and troublesome times which afterwards followed, why doe we not sit downe and rest our selves in this old and safe harbour of Peace and Unity?

Concerning the Point of *Prædestination*, how doth the Church of Christ groane under the burden of a number of huge & high swolne Volumes? Yet when wee have done all we can, and wearied our selves and the Christian world with our
O wrangling

These heads
are granted
on both sides
in this Con-
ference.

wrangling pens, this will still remaine to be knowne and beleived by all men, 1. that God from all eternity out of his meere good pleasure did immutably elect some unto Salvation. 2. that none were elected by God, nor shall be saved, who doe not beleive in Jesus Christ, and persevere in this Faith. 3. that none can beleive in Christ, save onely they whom God is pleased to enable hereunto, and to worke it in them by the effectuall grace of his Spirit. 4. that God did not damne, no nor reprobate any man, but with an eye to sin: so that all the cause & the blame of men's Damnation, lie's in themselves; but the cause of Election and Salvation is in the meere grace and mercy of God. Now all this is confest on both sides. I know right well, there are infinite Questions & Controversies raised about this Point: Let every man on God's name enjoy his owne Opinion; I will not prescribe to any man. For my selfe, if any man be desirous to know what my Opinion herein is, I freely professe my selfe to adhere to the Articles

cles of the Church of England, and to the judgement of our English Divines who voted in the Synod at *Dort* (wherein my selfe was present) But what is there in this profound Point, about which vulgar and illiterate Christians need to trouble themselves, save onely that plaine & obvious Truth confest by all? For the rest, let Divines dispute them in the Schooles; but it were well if they would forbear to meddle with them in the Pulpit. How are the very same Controversies, and others of greater waight and moment, still on foot in the Church of *Rome*, and yet so warily and wisely doe they carry the matter, that the publike Peace is notwithstanding preserved amongst them. Let vs learne wisdom from them who professe nought but enmity towards us. Would but Christian Princes by their Authority decree, & Divines fairely and moderately containe and keep themselves within these bounds of Disputation and Controversie (bounds indeed larg and spacious enough,) wee should have a lasting & firme Agreement,

the Church would flourish in Peace and Tranquillity, and lastly Truth would become victorious and triumph over the common Enemy.

That this may be brought to passe (as we all wish and desire it should) the honourable States and Delegates did very wisely propose and advise that a publike Meeting of peaceable Divines should be summoned and sought for by Invitatory Letters, that the freindly & laudable Conference, which was begun at *Lisfwich*, should be reassumed and prosecuted with like modesty as it had formerly been begun; that all such Divines of note & eminence as cannot be present at that meeting should send over their Opinions and advice; that all the Fundamentalls of Religion, necessary for Salvation, should be determined, and all other Points laid aside, and turned over to the Schooles (if need should require;) that in the meane time men's tongues and pens should be enjoyed moderation or else silence; that lastly publike Prayers should be solemnly made in

in the Churches of both sides for the successe of this good worke. Let but these things be done with an upright heart, in the feare of God, and wee need not doubt of a happy issue: it is God's own Cause, he will not be wanting to himselfe.

For you, M^r Dury, who have hitherto with such zeale, such unwearied paines, so many dangers, so great charges, prosecuted this Designe so well pleasing to God, his Angells, and men; truly you have deserved so well of the whole Church, as that all good men must acknowledge themselves much indebted to you. Goe on (worthy Sir) with your great undertakings, and put a period to this good worke: or rather, may the great God of Heaven & Earth doe this for you and us all; and may he still preserve and prosper you in these travailes and labours of yours. Farewell from

Your loving freind

JOS: EXON:





THE
OPINION OF THE
MOST REVEREND FATHER
IN GOD JAMES USHER Lord
Arch-Bishop of ARMAGH and
Primate of *Ireland*, with some o-
ther Reverend Bishops
in *IRELAND*.

Reverend and much respected
Brother in Christ; Wee had
long since by common con-
sent made ready an Answer to
your former Letters which you writ unto
us severally some Moneths ago: but be-
ing desirous to have likewise a generall
Subscription to it, according to that agree-
ment which should be betwixt fellow-
brethren of the Clergy, we deferred the
sending of it somewhat the longer in
hopes of a meeting. You desire us now in
your

your second Letter dated from *London March 20.* that we would give you our Opinion concerning the Conference at *Lipfwich*; the rather, because that Conference is likely to have some effect and influence upon the busines you have in hand. Thus therefore; that meeting (though it was called for other ends and reasons) yet seeing it was holden with such good successe, and that the cheife Divines of both sides had so faire & freindly a Conference, heard one another with such patience, & parted with such love and brotherly affection, it is a very good signe that this matter is from the Lord, and from this good beginning who can chuse but hope for a happy and succesfull issue?

But yet notwithstanding, they parted differing about three Points: it is well that they differd but in three; & 'tis better yet, that even in those three Points they agreed in most things, and such as are of greatest moment; nor was their difference so much about the thing it selfe, as about some Formes of expression, which for the most

most part we cannot so easily forget and cast off after we have been long accustomed to them. For seeing it is confessed on both sides, that Christ hath two natures in one person, so inseparably united that neither can they be divided, nor are they confounded, but still remaine distinct and severall without all mixture or æquality (so much as of their Properties,) to what end is it to quarrell about improper and figurative Propositions? so likewise in the *Eucharist*, seeing they both agree that the Faithfull doe eat not only the fruit and benefit, but the very essence (or *Substance*) of Christ's body; and that on God's part the Sacraments are exhibited entire & perfect, the thing signified together with the sign, what doe they contending about Hypocrites and unbelievers? 'tis all one as if Physicians should fall a disputing about a dead man, whether or no the Potion he tooke hath any operation upon him. There remaines yet that other much controverted Question touching *Prædestination*: and yet even in this too it would be no hard

P

matter

matter for them to be reconciled, were but spleen and partiality laid aside, and in the roome thereof a reverent and modest feare how we pry too farre into God's secret Counsell, placed and planted: seeing the best and ablest Divines of both sides acknowledge, that in many Questions about this Mystery we must be faine to take up *S^t Paul's* exclamation, *O the depth!* and that 'tis both lawfull & sufficient for them to rest and hold together in those cleare & undoubted Trueths; namely, that the Election of such as shall be saved, was made in Christ; that the destruction of all such as perish, is from themselves; that Salvation is from God; that Faith (yea even foreseen Faith) is not from our selves, it is the gift of God; that we may not boast of any thing, seeing we have nothing of our own; all must be ascribed to God: as *S. Cyprian* of old devoutly and pithily spake.

Thus you have, both what we hope & conceive of the Conference at *Lipswich*. But the most principall and speciall thing, which should be earnestly preft and inculcated,

cated, is this, that in Divine matters, especially in such high and difficult mysteries as these are, which are rather to be adored than pried into, we ought to have a certaine and set Rule to speake by, as *S. Austin* sometimes prudently and piously counselled: & therefore it would be a very safe and good course for us to refraine from all novell and new-fangled expressions, and to confine the liberty of Prophecyng to such Formes and Phrases as the holy Scriptures doe furnish us withall. It remaines, that wee earnestly beseech the God of Peace to *bruise Satan under our feet*, & that *shortly*: unto which God we heartily commend you (Reverend Brother) & rest

May 14.

Anno 1634.

Your most affectionate freinds

JAMES ARMAGH.

WILLIAM KILMORE.

JOHN ARDAGH.



THE JUDGEMENT OF THE
 same right Reverend Father, the Lord
 Arch-Bishop of ARMAGH, delivered
 in a Sermon of his preached be-
 fore K. I AMBS at *Wansted*,
 June 20th. 1624.



At this day wee should
 take a survey of the sever-
 rall Professions of Christi-
 anity, that have any large
 spread in any part of the
 world (as of the Religion
 of the *Romane* and the *Reformed* Churches
 in our Quarters, of the *Aegyptians* and
Aethiopians in the South, of the *Grecians* &
 other Christians in the Easterne parts,)
 and should put-by the Points wherein
 they differ one from another, and gather
 into one body the rest of the Articles
 wherein they doe all generally agree; wee
 should

should finde, that in those Propositions which without all Controversie are universally received in the whole Christian world, so much trueth is contained, as being joyned with holy obedience, may be sufficient to bring a man unto everlasting salvation. Neither have we cause to doubt, but that *as many as doe walke according to this rule* (neither overthrowing that which they have builded by superinducing any *damnable heresies* thereupon, nor otherwise vitiating their *holy Faith* with a lewd and wicked conversation) *peace shall be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.*

Gal 6, 16.







THE
OPINION OF SOME
FAMOUS DIVINES OF
the FRENCH Church.



That which hath been
the constant and earnest
wish of all good men
for these hundred yeares
past, and which by all
wise men hath been e-
steemed worthy to be purchased at any
rate and with any paines though never so
great; this (we heare, to the exceeding
great joy of our hearts) is at this day en-
deavoured by some worthy servants of
Christ, with singular zeale, and not with-
out good hopes of a happy successe: to
wit, that the *Protestant* Churches which
differ

differ one from another about some Points of Religion, laying aside or at least moderating on both sides their over-tenacious adhering to their own Opinions, may now at length be united and made up into one body. We being much joyed with this welcome newes, first of all we render all possible praise and thanksgiving to almighty God the giver of all good things, that he hath been pleased to put such good thoughts and intentions into the hearts of his servants; and wee most earnestly beseech him, that his blessing may goe along with this good designe, & crowne it with successe: next, we returne many thanks to those our reverend and worthy Brethren and fellow-Ministers, who have put their hands to this worke, and we doe highly applaud and admire their faithfulness, zeale, charity, and singular magnanimity & courage herein. What a brave and noble spirit doe's it argue in them, that they could once hope for an Unity and Peace of our Churches in these desperate and distracted times? Or that they

they durst venter upon a matter of such difficulty, which had so often been attempted heretofore by men of great abilities, but could never be brought to passe? What the event of this so great and good a designe will be, is in the sole power & pleasure of almightie God: but surely the very endeavouring and intending of so good a worke deserve's no litle commendation: for, the bare purpose or having in one's heart and thoughts matters of great concernment, and such as may make for the good of Christ's Church, is a great and good worke, & never faile's of its reward from our bountifull God: although there be good cause to hope, that the paines which learned men take hereabout shall even with men too have its fruit & effect. For, now that they have spent their spirits and heat of contention, & wearied themselves with long strife and variance, it is more than probable that they will now at last entertaine those Counsells of Peace which they have hitherto out of spleene and passion rejected and set light by. Be-

Q

sides

sides, that most sharp plowshare of God's judgement wherewith for almost these foureteene yeares he hath furrowed and plowed up the *French* and *German* Churches, hath so subdued & broken up men's minds on each side, that never was there a more fit and seasonable opportunity for sowing and casting in the seeds of Unity and Peace, than now. Wee cannot chuse therefore but greatly approve, commend, and admire the purposes and endeavours of those worthy men who have imployed their paines in so necessary a worke : but since we understand how that they are desirous to knowe more particularly what our Opinion is of this whole businesse, let us proceed to set downe (as breifly and plainly as we can) our judgement herein.

Indeed it were much to be wished, that they who professe themselves Christ's Disciples and followers, would all think and speake alike of matters spirituall and Divine; *perfectly joyned together in the same minde and in the same judgement,* (as *S. Paul* exhorts his *Corinthians.*) But since there is

so much weaknesse in man's understanding, and so great difficulty in Points of Divinity, that this perfect and absolute agreement betwixt pious men is a thing not to be had or hoped for in this world; in the next place it were to be wished, that they would agree and be of the same beleife about the maine & principall Heads of Religion: and for other matters which are of lesse moment and use, and such as do not any way make either for holinesse of life, or comfort of men's consciences, & consequently doe not necessarily pertaine to Christ's kingdome (which consists in those two things) that they would in such wise beleive them, as to beare with others who dissent frō them about such Points. For as we see in civill & secular matters, the best States-men are not alwaies of the same Opinion concerning the affaires of the Commonwealth; so likewise in the Church, so long as the summe and substance of Religion is agreed upon & maintained, no matter though in some other Points the judgements of the Faithfull be

Rom. 15. 1.
Phil. 3. 15.

various and different. That this is lawfull, both the thing it selfe loudly proclaimes it, and *S. Paul* confirms it; who doe's not only permit but command us (more than once) to beare with such as differ from us in their Opinions: and 'tis the common and generall Opinion of all such Divines as have been of any note and esteem in the Church ever since our Saviour Christs times downe to this present age.

Yet is not this so to be understood, as if all manner of Differences in Religion were to be tolerated: for even the same Apostle denounceth an *Anathema* against such as shall preach any other Gospell than that which he had preached; and the most moderate amongst the Fathers of the Christian Church have alwaies constantly held, that we are to shunne and avoid the company of Hereticks. For there bee some Opinions of those men who differ about Religion, which overthrow the very foundation of our Salvation, & destroy either that Piety or that Charity which wee are commanded by Gods word to practise

practise towards God and men : such are the erroneous Doctrines of *Romanists*, who will have that religious worship given to creatures, which God hath reserved peculiar to himselfe; who make our Faith to rely upon the judgement and authority of men; who severall waies overthrow the Priestly office of Jesus Christ; in a word, who have with their own inventions so stained and deformed the whole Christian Religion, that they have left no one part in it sound and untainted. Such likewise are the Opinions of *Socinians*, who (to let passe their other Positions) deny our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus to be truely God: and if once you take away his Divinity, it will necessarily follow, that either wee worship a creature, or else that we doe not worship the sonne of God; both of which are manifestly repugnant to those Trueths which are delivered to us in holy Writ as absolutely necessary to Salvation. We conceive therefore that no Peace in way of Religion can be had with thele men, nor with

any others who maintaine any Errours of this nature, till they shall renounce these their private Doctrines. But for those who hold some erroneous Opinion which yet may consist with Piety, & Charity, and all Christian duties belonging thereunto, we think (as *S. Paul* seeme's to have determined) a Communion may be held with them. Wee may mildly admonish such, and when opportunity is offered, discreetly reprove and instruct them; but to cast them out of the Church, and (for no other cause) to curse and excommunicate them as men in a desperate and damnable estate, this (in our opinion) is neither fitting nor lawfull to be done.

Now to apply this to the matter in hand, we conceive that to this latter sort all those Controversies doe belong which are agitated amongst Protestant Divines, touching *Christ's presence in the Sacramentall signes*, touching *divine Prædestination*, and some few other Points. For they doe agree in all such Points as conduce either to Piety towards God, or Charity towards

wards men; they maintain on both sides, that the Scriptures are of divine inspiration; that they are perfect, perspicuous, and authentick; they detest with one heart & mouth the Tyranny, and pernicious Doctrines of the Pope, and they equally keep off from entertaining a Communion with him; they have the same Sacraments; they worship the same Christ; they professe the same righteousnesse and holinesse in this life, and they expect the same glory in the life to come: in a word, so great and so wonderfull an agreement is there betwixt them about all saving and necessary Doctrines, that (did not the history of their affaires, and those bitter contentions which have hitherto (more is the pittie) been fomented amongst them, witnesse the contrary) there's no man but would thinke they had a meeting at the beginning, and by common counsell & consent agreed upon the same Confession of Faith. In such a multitude of mysteries, who can chuse but admire that there should not be above one or two Points wherein

wherein they did not fully agree? For even about the Eucharist, which is the maine matter of this woefull Division, they both of them grant that 'tis a Sacrament, not a Sacrifice; that it is to be eaten, not worshipped; both the two kinds instituted by our Saviour Christ (to wit, bread and wine) are neither transubstantiated nor divided one from the other by either side; they both acknowledge the same use and end of this holy Rite, to wit the commemorating of Christ's death, & the partaking of his body which was crucified, and of his blood which was shed for us: There is onely one thing about which they disagree, namely the manner how Christ's body is given to us and received by us in that Sacrament; the thing is the same on both sides, onely the manner of it is divers. This Difference, though it be but small, yet is it not (wee confesse) altogether of no moment: but that it should be of so great moment, as that it ought to make a breach of charity and affection amongst Brethren, a duty so useful and

and necessary to the Christian world, and so miraculously wrought amongst them by the hand of Heaven, this we utterly deny. Neither doe We alone deny it: to say nothing of our Brethren in *Poland*, and almost all the *Germans* which hold with us, who (as it is well knowne to all men) ever did, and at this day doe make the same reckoning and account of that Controversy as we but now did; to say nothing likewise of those famous Divines of both sides in *Saxony* and *Brandenburge*, who (as we have been informed) were lately of the very same opinion concerning these Points, when they had fairely discussed them at *Lipswich*, whither they were come with their Princes. But one thing there is which we cannot here omit to mention, a matter perhaps not so well knowne to forraine nations, yet such a matter it is as we confidently beleive will be most welcome and acceptable to all good & peaceable men, to wit that the Reformed Churches here in *France* (whereof there are good store) have alwaies been of that same

R

Opinion

Opinion touching these Controversies, & they have given testimony of this their Opinion, both heretofore sundry waies, and likewise now very lately by an expresse Dècree made in a generall Synod held here at *Charenton* neare *Paris* in the yeare 1631. For when, upon occasion of a citizen of *Lions* (unto whose daughter a certaine young *German* of the *Augustane* Confession, as they call it, was a suiter) it was questiond, how we are to account and esteeme of such as are commonly termed *Lutherans*; all the Brethren which were there met, out of all the Provinces of *France*, and sent thither from their severall Churches, did unanimously vote thus; *That seeing the Churches of the Augustane Confession doe agree with the other Reformed Churches in all the Principles and fundamentall Points of true Religion, and that in their Discipline and forme of Divine worship there is neither Idolatry nor Superstition: such of the Faithfull of that Confession as shall with the spirit of Charity and in a truly peaceable way joyne themselves unto the publike Assemblies*
of

of the Churches in this Kingdome, and desire to communicate with them, may, without the abjuration of their former Opinions which they hold contrary to the beleife of these Churches, be admitted to the holy Table, contract marriages with the faithfull of our Confession, and present themselves in the quality of Godfathers to the children which shall be baptized; upon their promise given to the Consistory, that they will never sollicite such children, directly or indirectly, against the Doctrine beleived and professed in our Churches, but shall content themselves with giving them instruction onely in those Points wherein we all agree.

We are not ignorant, how that many objections may be made against this Decree by such as have a mind to contend & cavill: but such objections they are, most of them, as have but litle strength and validity in them, and such as can no way stand in comparison with those waighty reasons wherewith the Christian Faith and Charity doe furnish us. It is not our purpose to insist on every particular; onely in general, we think it not amisse to put men

in minde of two things , which if they were observed with that care as it fitting; both sides perhaps would henceforth judge more mildly and charitably of each other than hitherto they have done.

First then, speciall heed would be taken by us, that the assertions and Opinions of private men, though Doctors, though of never so great esteem and repute amongst their own men, be not father'd on that whole Church wherein such men live, as the common and generally received Doctrine of them all. For what can be imagined more unequall, than that one mans crime, or commendation, should be imputed to all? and what by him hath been spoken well or ill, should be rewarded or punished in others, who were so farre from deserving any such matter, as that many times such things are fastned on them as they never so much as once heard of from others, or once thought thereupon themselves. The generall Doctrine of each severall Church is laid downe and comprised in publike Confessions, severall for each

each side; Their's (namely the Doctrine of the *Lutheran* party) in the *Augustane* Confession (as they terme it ;) that of the other side, in many severall Confessions, diversly expressed according to the diversity of Countries and Kingdomes. From these are we to judge and esteeme what is held and maintained by both: seeing they doe all professe themselves to assent and adhere to these, and that they will live & dye in this Faith. But (for ought I know) neither doe they so generally approve the writings of *Brentius* or *Chemnitius*, nor doe these so farre magnifie *Piscator* or *Bezæ*, as if they would that whatsoever is affirmed by those men, should be admitted and acknowledged as the common and necessary Faith of all Christians. Nay so farre are they both of them from this folly, that they themselves freely reprove and censure their own men, and mark out many passages in their writings, as different from the common and received Doctrine of their Church. Whence it follow's, that the sayings of such men, who-

soever they be, are unjustly, and (to speake the most favourably of it) preposterously fatherd on the whole Church in which they lived. And yet notwithstanding, what else are all those Tenents with which Protestant Divines cast one another in the teeth , with which they upbraide one another as if they were the publike and generall faults of the two adverse parts , and for which they so labour to draw one another into envy & contempt? I say, what else are they but the private Positions of some particular Doctors on both sides, vented many times either in choler and passion, or out of a vehement zeale to maintaine their Cause, when they were hard pressed & put to it either with the difficulty of the things themselves, or the subtilty of an acute adversary; and so, spake rather out of necessity than judgement and premeditation. For truly so sound and untainted are the publike Confessions of our Churches on each side, that there is very litle and hardly any thing which either of them can finde wanting in

in the other's Confession. Our Divines in Germany doe commend the *Augustane* Confession; and no doubt but our Brethren the *Lutherans* will in like manner approve of ours, for the farre greater part of it, would they but once be pleased to read it over impartially without passion and prejudice. Certainly neither in that Confession of theirs shall any man meet with that *Ubiquity* of Christ's body, which wee condemne in *Lutheranisme*; nor in this of ours, that *Stoicall Fate* so much objected against us.

But a second fault there is, very frequent amongst men of both sides, and almost hereditary, which ought (as we conceive) with all care and diligence to be shun'd and avoided in this businesse: namely, that they who maintaine any Position, should not bee thought to hold whatsoever seemes to us to follow thereupon by the rules of disputation. For it often fall's out, that he who hold's a Principle from which such a Conclusion is inferred, may notwithstanding be utterly ignorant

norant of that which is inferred from his Principle. For instance, he that first observed the Loadstone to point towards the North Pole, did not forthwith perceive all the severall experiments that have been afterwards made from thence for the use and benefit of Navigation : for Conclusions lye hid and buried in their Principles, nor are they deduced thence without some paines and study. He therefore who holds some Principle, and withall doth either not heed and regard it ; or else considers it, but with an Intellect which is either dull or prepossessed with anger or affection or some other passion, this man, from that Principle of his which hee understands, doth not straightway understand whatsoever may be knowne and concluded from it. Thus they who live in the Papacy, having their mindes bewitched (that I may so speake) with the authority of their Leaders, though they grant with us that the sinnes of men are most fully expiated by that sacrifice offered up by Christ on the Crosse, yet can they

they not hence conclude (although it evidently follow hereupon) that their Sacrifice of the Altar is vaine and superfluous. Now as he who understand's some one Trueth , is sometimes ignorant of other Trueths which are consequent thereupon: so likewise he who hath some erroneous Opinion , must not therefore be thought to hold and maintaine all the absurdities that may be inferred from it : for there's the same account to bee made of consequences either way. Thus *Tertullian* of old, and many of the ancient Fathers, taught that the humane soule is derived from the Father to the Sonne by way of propagation; but that 'tis mortall , which followes upon the former , this they were so farre from granting , that they did alwaies expressly deny it. As therefore wee doe not say that the Papists doe therefore deny their Sacrifice of the Altar, because they grant (as we doe) the perfection and sufficiency of that Sacrifice which was offered up by Christ on the crosse, though in all good consequence this overthrowes

S

that

that sacrifice of theirs: so neither doe we think that *Tertullian*, & others of the same Opinion touching the originall of man's soule, ought to be charged for holding the Soule to be mortall, because this latter error seeme's to be deducible from the former.

Now then how extreme faulty in this kinde Divines of both sides have beene, who is there that see's not? For we commonly charge our Brethren (the *Lutherans*) with *Eutychianisme*, (though they in the meane time deny and disclaime it,) because this error, as we think, follows upon their Doctrine concerning the Lord's supper: they againe on the other side, stick not to charge us with I knowe not what monstrous Opinions, as if we made God the author of all sin and wickednesse, (assertions which we justly abhorre & tremble at, because they perswade themselves that this may be gathered from our Doctrine about God's Prædestination and Providence. Wee will not here dispute whether these things be rightly inferred
yea

yea or no from our severall Tenents and Opinions on both sides : it sufficeth , that whatsoever they be, whether justly or unjustly pin'd upon our Opinions , they are denied by us both: nor can we ever be induced by any arguments whatsoever , to grant that they are agreeable and consonant to our Faith. For so long as this is done (as indeed it is,) it is manifest from what hitherto hath been delivered, that neither can they without injustice and calumniation bee charged with *Eutychia-nisme*, nor we with those monstrous and damnable Opinions, although both these errors could by true & solid consequence be concluded from our severall Positions, (which yet neither side will ever confesse for their own part.)

Seeing therefore that all or most of those Doctrines which the one side taxeth in the other as pernicious and such as cannot consist with Salvation , are but either the private Opinions of some particular men, or else but Corollaries and conclusions violently wrested by force of argument out

of their severall Opinions , would but men (as in reason they ought) forbear to father any thing on either side save onely that which their whole Churches expressly owne and professe for their received Opinions, it would be very easie to maintaine that all the Dispute and Controversie which is in agitation betwixt them, is such as may be tolerated , and that there is not any thing contained in the Faith and Doctrine of either side which overthrowe's Salvation.

Now were but this once agreed upon and beleived on both sides , there would remaine litle or no difficulty in this whole businesse wherein worthy men doe at this present employ themselves, namely of settling Peace and Unity amongst our Churches. For seeing there are but two waies possible of being reconciled ; either , that one side shall renounce their private Opinions, and come over to the other; or else, that both sides shall joyne together , retaining their severall Opinions, and by a mutuall condescending shall each of them tolerate

lerate that which they dislike in the other's Doctrine, especially if it be such as cannot be altered without perill and damage to a whole Church; the former of these two waies (as we conceive) is not now to be stood upon, whereof triall hath been heretofore made not onely without successe but with much danger & harme, as appeares sufficiently from those many Disputations & Conferences which have been held betwixt both sides during this whole Age; whereby hatred and & enmity hath been ingendred rather than extinguished, and the number of Controversies rather increased than diminished. Wee must therefore betake our selves to that other way of being reconciled, and in it must we employ all our paines and cares & studies, as being indeed both the only-easie and lawfull way, yea and necessary too in our judgement. And that wee may at length attaine unto this, it would not be amisse (as we conceive) to proceed after this manner and method; first, wee must endeavour that a kinde of Truce and

Cessation from our strifes & contentions may be agreed upon and enjoined the Divines of both sides, and that they be stirred up and exhorted to take this whole businesse into consideration: this being obtained, in the next place speciall diligence must be used, that after a meeke, freindly, and most persuasive manner it be made appeare to all, that we are not at variance about any fundamentall Point of Christian Religion, or such wherein men may not safely be of either Opinion without hazarding their salvation: and here men must be very carefull that they refraine from all intricate Questions, and trifling Disputes, (such wherein the Schoolemen have spent so much paines, mincing and mangling every thing into I know not how many peices, & then handling every peice severally,) which serve for no other end save onely to torture & torment mens mindes, but no way make for edification. Would but God be pleased so farre to prosper these endeavours as that thus much may be once brought to passe, wee make

no doubt but every man would then readily wish for this much-desired Communion, which none ever shunn'd or refused but out of a kinde of Religion and Conscience, conceiving it unlawfull to entertaine a Communion with any that are not of the same beleife and Opinion with themselves: so soone as men on both sides shall be wrought off from this superstitious conceit, they will gladly run and rush (as it were) into one anothers armes and embraces. For it cannot be imagined that there is any man, either of the one side or the other, so stupid & void of all reason & Religion, but knows how foul & scandalous a thing, how hurtfull to both sides, how dangerous and pernicious to the whole Christian world this Schisme is which hath hitherto divided and distracted us, on the other side, how sweet, how beneficiall, both to our selves & all others, Unity and Peace would be, so it might be had without losse of Faith and Salvation. And truely* the way to settle this Unity (were we but once come to that) is plaine
and

and easie. For seeing we doe both of us (by God's grace) equally acknowledge and beleive the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ penned by his Disciples ; and seeing we confesse, that whatsoever is of necessity for salvation to be beleived or done by us, it is all clearly and plainly laid downe in this Gospell, what hinder's why we may not joyntly confirme and ratify those Articles wherein we both agree ? & for those other Points about which wee differ , wee may expresse them in such words and phrases as the sacred Scriptures afford us, and not suffer our men to enquire any further, or contest about the. For if it be true which we both confesse, that all those heavenly mysteries which must necessarily be knowne by us , are clearly revealed in God's word, doubtles then we may content our selves with so much as the Scripture has delivered , and wee may safely forgoe all other Points wherein the Scripture is silent. Let therefore all the Heads of matters in Dispute amongst us be laid downe and expressed in

a certaine and set Forme, such as may give satisfaction to both parties, made up wholly (if it be possible) of Scripture-words: and let no man require from his Brother any more besides it: if any man have attained to a further degree of knowledge, let him keep his knowledge to himselfe; and let him not despise the weaknesse and simplicity of others who have not made so great a progresse in knowledge as himselfe. As for Rites and Ceremonies wherein the forme of divine worship and the Churches Discipline are contained, we conceive it fit that every Church should be left to her owne judgement and liberty herein, and that no innovation be made about such matters.

Hereafter, if it shall please God, when time shall have confirmed and strengthened this Union, there may be compiled, by the joynt consent and advice of all, a common Liturgy; which would be both a token and bond of Peace. For the present, we shall think our paines well bestowed, if at this first attempt we can prevaile with

T

both

both sides to tolerate mutually out of Christian Charity such differences of Opinion as are betwixt us either in Doctrine or Discipline (which truely are but small, & altogether unworthy to occasion such a Rupture and Breach betwixt us,) and so at length to acknowledge one another to be (as indeed we are) Brethren in the Lord.

Thus much we thought good to speak in breife touching this matter, that our reverend Brethren, who are well affected to the publike Peace, may understand how ready & willing wee are to concurre with them in this pious and Christian worke. And though our meane abilities and the present state and condition of our affaires be such, as that wee cannot performe such service in it as is meet and requisite, yet shall our earnest prayers alwaies accompany the labours and endeavours of those reverend men who are or shall be employed therein: and we shall account that day most happy, wherein we shall behold Brethren (having buried all
strifes

strifes and contentions) joyne hands and hearts, and dwell together in the same *Jerusalem*; by this fast and firme Communion, anticipating (as it were) & foreacting here upon earth that everlasting

Unity and Concord which we
shall hereafter enjoy in
Heaven. AMEN.

FINIS.



THE
FRENCH
LIBRARY

